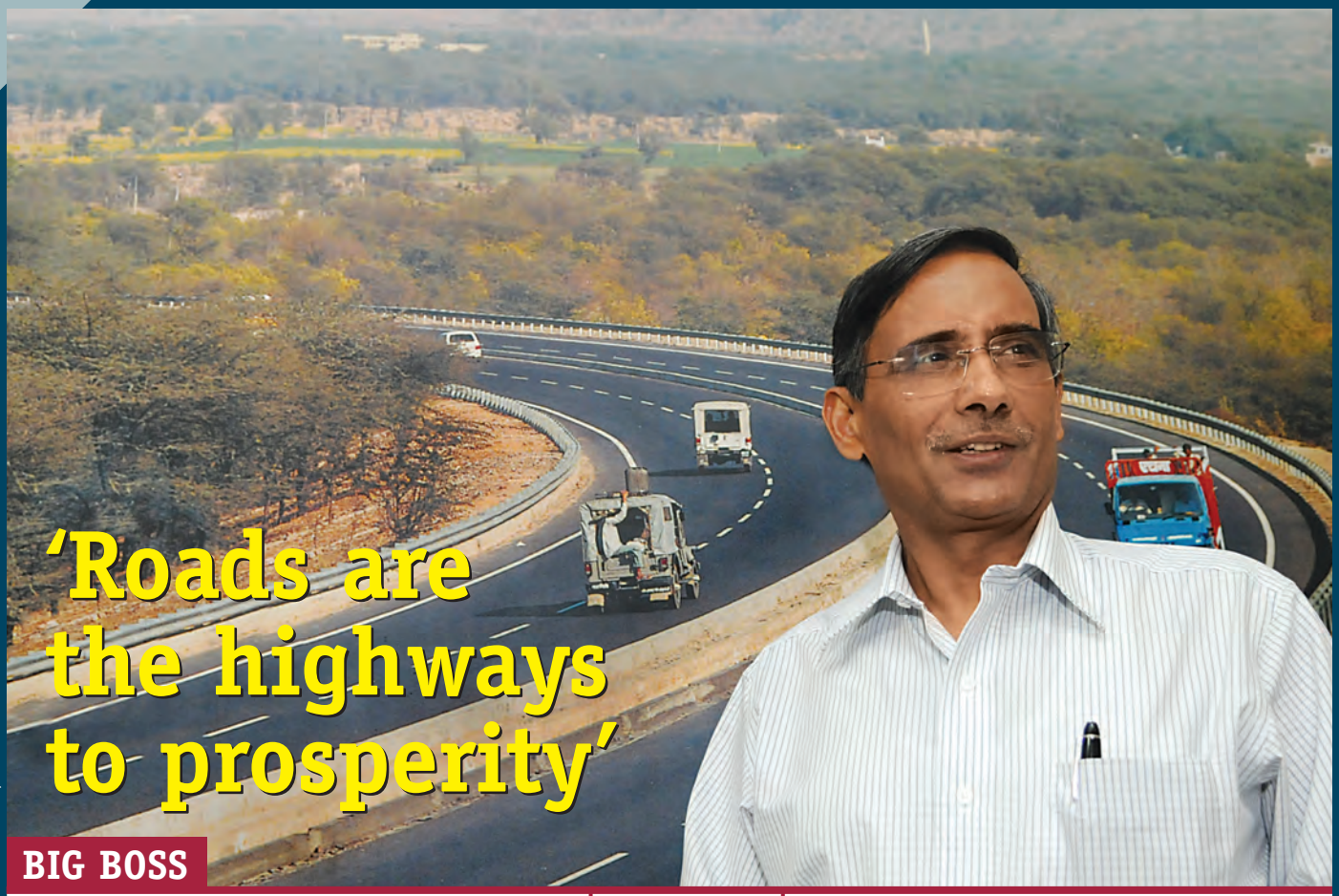
EXCLUSIVE: BEHIND-THE-SCENES LOOK AT THE COURTIERS WHO ENFORCE MAYAWATI'S IRON-FISTED RULE OVER THE STATE

Defence
Empowering women? p12
Governance: Grassroots farce p21
Parliament
Report cards for netas p22
Global Scan
Nepal's nightmare p24

VOL. 2, ISSUE 6 | SEPTEMBER 2008 | RS 200
R.N.I. NO: DELENG/2007/19719

gfiles
INSIDE THE GOVERNMENT



FOTOS4INDIA

'Roads are the highways to prosperity'

BIG BOSS

secretary, road transport & highways | brahm dutt |

interviewed by ANIL TYAGI

A career civil servant from the Indian Administrative Service, Brahm Dutt was born on July 5, 1950 in Meerut district of Uttar Pradesh. He belongs to the 1973 batch from Karnataka and holds degrees in MSc (Physics), MA (Economics) and an LLB. In his cadre state, he has been Principal Secretary, Home as well as Disinvestment and Public Sector Reforms, Education Secretary, Chairman and Managing Director, Mysore Paper Mills Ltd, Commissioner of Industrial Development and Director of Industries and Commerce, and Deputy Commissioner of Mysore district.

At the Centre, he has been Chairman, National Authority for Chemical Weapons Convention and ex-officio Secretary in the Cabinet Secretariat, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Industry, and Deputy Secretary/Director, Ministry of Commerce. He has also been Commercial Counselor at the Indian embassy in Washington.

As head of the Department of Road Transport and Highways, he is responsible for formulation and implementation of policies and programmes for development of the country's road network, including the prestigious National Highway Development Project. He is also responsible for administration of the Motor Vehicle Act.

gfiles: *Everyone wants to know from the Secretary, Road Transport why roads get damaged every rainy season and who is responsible – contractors, local administration, state administration or Central administration?*

Brahm Dutt: Roads get damaged for many reasons. Drainage within the country is poor, we have resource constraints, overloading of vehicles, misuse of roads and heavy traffic. Roads are a state subject and the government policy on road management is very clear. We have National Highways, state highways and state roads. Barring National Highways, the roads are managed by the state governments.

Roads require high maintenance and repair takes time. Definitely,

contents

BRIC-A-BRAC
errors, some genuine, some contrived, and a dollop of warmth
6

INSIDE STORY
a peek into the wings that explains why doordarshan is the way it is
8

GUEST DESK
a plea from the heart by one of the governed to those who govern
10

DEFENCE
women's lib in the armed forces and the new procurement procedure
12

SPECIAL REPORT
sebi's strangely partisan behaviour; the band of drones behind mayawati
16

GOVERNANCE
the absence of governance at the lowest rung and its unrecognized presence at the highest
21

GLOBAL SCAN
watching the void in governance in nepal and, further afield, in georgia
24

MILESTONE
rajesh kishore and his dept root out fake ration cards in gujarat
28

STOCK DOCTOR
keep your gaze fixed firmly on the horizon and you can't go wrong
29

BY THE WAY
stories of honesty, string-pulling, meteoric rises and how every junior babu has his sunny day
34

he who owns the roads should be held responsible for damaged roads. Regarding resource constraint, we get only Rs 900 crore for maintenance of roads. State governments ask for Rs 1 lakh per kilometre for ordinary repairs and we provide them hardly Rs 50,000.

Overloading of vehicles is a very serious problem that results in heavy damage in geometric progression.The enforcement of rules and regulations laid down by us to check overloading is unsatisfactory. The Supreme Court has come out heavily against overloading. It has said that overloaded vehicles should be allowed to ply only after the extra load is removed.

People dig up roads for drainage. Various departments dig up roads for laying telephone lines, electricity lines and don't fill up or repair them. Roads require overlaying every five years for longer life. This is not done by all the states. Besides, roads are facing the pressure of heavy traffic.

'We collect Rs 2000 crore from toll roads and bridges. This money is utilized for further expansion'

gfiles: *Does India lack proper planning for road management?*

BD: There is no confusion about road planning and administration. Since Independence, we have done proper planning for road administration. In its absence we would not have developed a gigantic network of 33,00,000 km of roads in the country. India has the second largest road network in the world. The states are facing scarcity of funds. Some roads are managed by local bodies, Nagar Palikas and other administrative bodies. Some local bodies have enough funds, others do not. Wherever funds are available, the roads are managed well. Especially in the Northeast, we lack capacity because the state Public Works Departments are not well-organized. Other reasons for lack of capacity are that the contractors are not technically equipped and that the region is hilly. But we are focusing on this area too. Road management in states is a local problem. But, by and large, at the national level proper planning does exist.

gfiles: *The state transport authorities are considered inefficient and corrupt. How are you going to overcome this problem?*

BD: The Regional Transport Authorities have a very important role to play in regulating the Motor Vehicle Act. We regulate the licensing system in transport. New guidelines have been prepared to issue licences to state carriers. You must know the government system in the states. Generally, a very important officer of the state is in charge of the State Transport Authority. There are Transport Secretaries too in states. In districts, Transport Commissioners look after road governance. In some states, a Senior Superintendent of Police is in charge of the Transport Authority. All these functionaries implement the Motor Vehicle Act in letter and spirit.

This Ministry has chalked out a massive e-governance plan for licensing and registration of vehicles. The National Informatics Centre has developed two pieces of software, Sarathi and Vahan. While the former is a software for computerization of driving licences, the latter aims at bringing about computerization of registration of vehicles. This is a Rs 150-crore project and 85 per cent of the work is complete. There are some states that do not have funds. We are providing a 100 per cent grant for the hardware too to such states.

Once this e-governance project is implemented, the enforcement agencies of the Motor Vehicle Act can easily check registration of vehicles and driving licences anywhere in the country with the aid of a simple hand-held device. This will help curb corruption and increase efficiency.

gfiles: *Private vehicular traffic has increased almost eight times more than public transport. How will you cope with this scenario?*

BD: In 1951, we had only three lakh vehicles. The number has now touched nine crore. Obviously, with rise in income, everyone wants to own a vehicle and....

gfiles: *Is it not leading to more congestion on the roads?*

BD: The government is aware of this problem. According to one study, a single bus carrying 65 passengers occupies the same space on the road as four cars carrying only

Continued on page 4

gfiles
INSIDE THE GOVERNMENT
VOL.2, ISSUE 6 | SEPTEMBER 2008

Inderjit Badhwar | EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
Anil Tyagi | EDITOR
Niranjan Desai | ROVING EDITOR
Meena Prakash Singh | EDITOR, CORPORATE PLANS
Yana Banerjee-Bey | DEPUTY EDITOR
Renu Mittal | POLITICAL EDITOR
GS Sood | BUSINESS EDITOR
Arun Lavania | MANAGING EDITOR
BK Dash, Yogesh Sharma | ASSOCIATE EDITORS
Sumit Bothra | BUREAU CHIEF – CHENNAI
Tara Patkar | BUREAU – LUCKNOW
Kh Manglembi Devi | EDITORIAL COORDINATOR
Graphis Inc | ART DIRECTION & DESIGN
Web Design | IT2MAX.COM
Harjeet Singh | MANAGER – SALES
Manjeet Singh Bhatia | MANAGER – OPERATIONS
Sumer Singh | ASSISTANT MANAGER – LOGISTICS
Fotos4India | PHOTOS
Ashok Sharma | DIRECTOR – PUBLIC RELATIONS
Amit Thakral | ADVERTISING, DELHI
Charanjit Kaur | HRD
Rajeev Saxena | LEGAL CONSULTANTS
Pradeep Tyagi, Nipun Jain | FINANCES

CONTACT DETAILS
118, 2ND FLOOR, DDA SITE 1,
NEW RAJINDER NAGAR, NEW DELHI – 110 060
TEL/FAX: +91-11-28744789, +91-11-45082832,
+91-11-20544692
e-mail: gfilesindia@gmail.com www.gfilesindia.com

ADVERTISING & MARKETING
Mubarak Ali MM & Abdul Samad MM | MEDIAMART
#5/1B 1ST FLR, RAJAMMAL ST, SHENOY NAGAR, CHENNAI
PH: +91-9444914905, +91-9941908888

All information in gfiles is obtained from sources that the management considers reliable, and is disseminated to readers without any responsibility on our part. Any opinions or views on any contemporary or past topics, issues or developments expressed by third parties, whether in abstract or in interviews, are not necessarily shared by us. Copyright exclusively with Sarvashrestha Media Pvt. Ltd. All rights reserved throughout the world. Reproduction of any material of this magazine in whole, or in part(s), in any manner, without prior permission, is totally prohibited. The publisher accepts no responsibility for any material lost or damaged in transit. The publisher reserves the right to refuse, withdraw or otherwise deal with any advertisement without explanation. All advertisements must comply with the Indian Advertisements Code.

Published and printed by Anil Tyagi on behalf of
Sarvashrestha Media Pvt. Ltd at Mayur Print House,
A 29/1 Naraina Industrial Area, Phase-1, New Delhi-110028

All disputes are subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of competent courts in New Delhi only

From the Editor-in-Chief

IT has been our attempt, over the past year, to make *gfiles* as interactive and participatory as possible. These words are bandied about with so much abandon these days that they lose their meaning and import. But they do convey, in their essentiality, some of the most important precepts of modern-day journalism. And, in a case such as ours, they help give a niche publication a greater universality and broad-based appeal.

gfiles is about good governance, its editorial content designed to focus on the men and women of India's sprawling civil services that cover almost every aspect of human endeavour and activity in this land. It is also a platform for debate, discourse, and prescriptive doctrines to allow fresh breezes to blow through the corridors of what is often seen as an ossified, hidebound monolith of paper-pushing babus.

But that does not mean that the magazine devotes all of its pages to departmental and micro-administrative matters. It addresses, above all, public policy issues covering a wide range of disciplines, in the hope that the bells of reform will start ringing in the ears of those who can bring about change and transition, so badly needed for an evolving democracy.

By "interactive" I do not mean simply an exchange of views among bureaucrats. One of our most interactive areas, in fact, is our cover feature, Big Boss, in which the men and women running the top departments of this nation converse with *gfiles* in a way they would be talking to the general public. A good illustration of this is Editor Anil Tyagi's freewheeling interview with Brahm Dutt, Secretary, Road Transport and Highways, that begins with the question: "Who is responsible for roads getting damaged every rainy season...?"

Recognition that we are on the right track comes, for example, in a letter to the editor in which the writer says: "Your interviews with senior officials...partly fill the gap left by the collapse of Question Hour in Parliament." Interaction also includes our effort to create bridges between citizens and bureaucrats. In this issue, for example, we carry a piece from Rama Naidu, who heads a foundation to help senior citizens, that poses a potent question for those who "govern" India: Why is it that those same tech-savvy, highly-skilled and trained bureaucrats who are able to provide ammunition to a Minister like Kamal Nath, enabling him to fight India's case before the WTO, are so inept and indifferent when it comes to dealing with the ordinary citizens of this country?

If they can perform for their political bosses then what is it that keeps them from performing for you and me? The same question is posed, albeit a little differently, by former IAS officer and author MG Devasahayam, who berates the system for having lost its commitment to grassroots governance.

You might wonder what an article on Georgia is doing in a magazine of our nature. Well, that's part of the "participatory" nature of *gfiles* that encourages civil servants who have experienced history in the making to participate in our editorial mix in order to explain, pontificate, and analyse. The Georgia piece is written by Nigam Prakash, one of India's most widely-travelled and savvy diplomats.

We hope you will enjoy reading our September issue as much as our team has enjoyed putting it together for you.

INDERJIT BADHWAR

LETTERS: Privileged to flip through *gfiles* for the first time, I was pleasantly surprised to come across incisive and analytical articles. My congratulations and best wishes for the magazine.

Bhanu Pratap Singh, Inspector-General of Police (Law & Order), Uttar Pradesh

Your interviews with senior officials are able to elicit a lot of information on what the Government of India is up to and thus partly fill the gap left by the collapse of Question Hour in Parliament and the lack of interest of the mainstream media in reporting the contents of written answers to questions by MPs.

Now, can it really be true that only 45 lakh children are out of school in the 6-14 years category? You ought to have examined this claim further. This means less than 70,000 children of this age group are out of school in Delhi, even if Delhi is considered an average for India. When one observes that the *dhaba* industry in India runs entirely on child labour (and this is true even for a so-called educationally advanced state like Tamil

Continued on page 4

Continued from page 3

Nadu), this figure is certainly questionable.

Second, when will our officials stop saying, "I don't want...." and "my department" and so on, forgetting that they are transient figures? The only civil servants who can

legally say that the entity s/he heads is his/hers is an ambassador who is charged by the President to personally represent him/her to the receiving Head of State. Yet our ambassadors do not usually speak like that. How can a Secretary talk about his wishes and preferences when the matter is none of his/her *ghar ka mamla*? This is revealing of a feudal attitude in the IAS and calls for criticism from the public and introspection by the members of the Service.
GS Iyer, via email

gfiles makes interesting reading besides being very informative.
Lt-Gen Avadhesh Prakash, Military Secretary, Integrated HQ of MoD (Army)

The magazine is excellent. The beauty of it is that it is devoid of any political news. Perhaps this is the only journal which gives information about the people who actually rule the nation. Very interesting.
Arun Kumar Singh, Scientist, Atomic Energy Commission, Hyderabad

We are a trust dedicated to instituting good governance. We congratulate you on exposing government files. Chester Bowles, US Ambassador during Nehru's government, once said, "India is a functioning anarchy". Recently, the Supreme Court observed, "Even God cannot help India; governments have become non-functional." This calls for a debate. Please visit our website (www.peoplefirstindia.org).
SK Sharma, IAS Retd, Managing Trustee, People First

'We have transformed road construction in a big way by introducing the latest technology and training our manpower'

four passengers. We are heading toward the metro rail, Bus Rapid Transit, and high-capacity buses. Our policy is to strengthen the public transport system.

gfiles: *Why don't you regulate the number of private vehicles?*

BD: Whether the time is ripe for such a proposal or not is a complex and debatable issue. In a democracy like ours, we have to be cautious while talking about regulation of vehicles. Most countries have found it difficult. Only Singapore has put some restrictions by way of peak hour taxation and heavy parking fees. The rules there are very stringent. The time has come to follow a policy in favour of public transport without being restrictive.We are not against private transport.

gfiles: *Toll bridges are causing more traffic congestion and delay in movement of vehicles....*

BD: We have two kinds of toll bridges in the country: totally high-tech and non-electronic. While the high-tech toll bridges pose no problem, the second kind has certain leakages. To overcome this problem, we are planning to make all the toll bridges electronic, even those that are non-Build-Operate-Transfer (BOT). We are in the process of completing the auction for operation, maintenance and transfer contract within a year. This will completely solve the problem.

gfiles: *What is the status of the Golden Quadrilateral Road Project?*

BD: This is a Rs 35,000-crore project to connect the four metros, covering 6,500 km. It has four-lane highways and costs Rs 8-10 crore per km, excluding land acquisition cost. Ninetyeight per cent of the work is complete.

gfiles: *How has it helped the nation?*

BD: Oh, through smooth movement of traffic, saving of man-hours and fuel, and reduction in wear and tear of vehicles. The Golden Quadrilateral is living testimony to the fact that connectivity is the key to development. Good roads can change the graph of the national economy.

gfiles: *Highway hospitality is conspicuously absent along highways. And lack of timely medical aid is the main reason for loss of lives when accidents occur.*

BD: We are aware of this. The National Highway Development Project has an inbuilt mechanism to take care of it. We have laid down the policy in agreement with the build-and-operate road contractors. The policy will provide for a patrol vehicle and an ambulance every 50 km on the highways.

'Those living next to a road want to occupy it....To meet this challenge, we have set up eight tribunals manned by judicial officials'

Emergency numbers will be displayed on highways. Underpass and overbridges have to be constructed for movement of cattle and local people. We are also considering appointment of a regulator to adjudicate and enforce the agreement between the users and road contractors.

We have taken a decision to open tourist resorts at 500 locations along the Golden Quadrilateral with the help of the Ministry of Tourism. Each will be built on 20-25 acres of land on Private-Public Partnership basis and leased to Private parties. We are also shifting petrol pumps not conforming to the norms and even providing them land. These centres will have parking lots for trucks and buses, and lay-bys. The whole project will be implemented in six months. This will also promote tourism besides providing every kind of facility to the common man.

gfiles: *Where is the trained manpower to implement the gigantic road construction projects throughout the country?*

BD: We have transformed road construction by introducing the latest technology and training our manpower. It is now common to see contractors using state-of-the-art machinery in constructing highways.

gfiles: *Fatal accidents occur because of untrained and illiterate drivers. How are you going to solve this problem?*

BD: Yes, we are facing this problem. We have raised driver qualifications under the Motor Vehicle Act. Now there is an emphasis on training. We are making stringent rules for checking licences and issuing licences of drivers.

gfiles: *What about having your own driver training institute?*

BD: We are open to the idea. We are talking to State Transport Authorities to open such schools under Public-Private Partnership where fitness of vehicles and training of drivers and issue of licences can be done. State Transport Authorities will accredit and finally approve these schools. We are involving professional bodies to help the State Transport Authorities. We already have one such centre in Burari, Delhi.

gfiles: *In view of increasing crime on the highways, are you planning to have a separate highway patrolling force?*

BD: This can't be done. Law and order is a state subject. We don't want to intervene and it is not a practical idea. We can only assist the states in maintaining law and order.

gfiles: *Is your capital expenditure on road development charity or business?*

BD: We are not in business but definitely need resources to develop roads. The government invests out of budgetary support. Whatever we receive as revenue we use for further growth of this sector. We collect Rs 2000 crore from toll roads and bridges. This money is utilized for further expansion.

gfiles: *Do you see road construction only as one of the heads of public expenditure or as one of the revenue-generating exercises in the long run?*

BD: It is not a revenue-generating exercise. Cess has helped the government in a big way. But for this, the dream of good roads would have eluded us. We earn Rs 12,500 crore from cess and, out of this, Rs 7,000 crore goes to national highways. Rs 2000 crore is distributed to state highways. Rs 2000 crore goes to rural roads. And about Rs 2000 crore goes for railway crossings etc. We collect toll only from 10,000 km of road.

Gfiles: *The states have been accusing the Centre of a partisan approach with regard to road construction.*

BD: There is no disparity at all. Our policy is to increase efficiency and at the same time take care of regional disparity. No state can say that we have not given it funds. Instead, some states have not been able to utilize the funds!

gfiles: *The massive encroachment on all major roads in the country is becoming uncontrollable. What steps are you taking?*

BD: Most of those living next to a road want to occupy it. It is a local problem. To meet this challenge, we have set up eight tribunals manned by judicial officials to settle the encroachment issues. With spread of education, civic sense will prevail and roads will be free of encroachment.

gfiles: *What is your biggest achievement as Secretary, Road Transport and Highways?*

BD: My role as Secretary has been to finalize policies, streamline functioning of the department, and prepare the Ministry to meet present and future challenges. In my year-long stint in this Ministry, the Motor Vehicle Act has been implemented. e-governance (the Sarathi and Vahan programmes) is the most significant work I have been able to complete for the country.

gfiles: *What is your biggest challenge?*

BD: My biggest challenge is to ensure strict implementation of the Motor Vehicle Act, and ensure good roads and their proper maintenance. g

The 'misnaming' of NREGA
maya benefits from 'oversight'

THE architects of the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005 blundered in not naming it after Rajiv Gandhi. In the past, most welfare programmes were named after national leaders: Nehru, Indira and Rajiv Gandhi. Perhaps they hardly anticipated that, unlike previous welfare programmes, the schemes under NREGA would be a great success.

NREGA provides for livelihood security in rural areas. It guarantees 100 days of employment to every household in a financial year. In Uttar Pradesh, it covers all districts and more than 17,33,987 households have been provided employment till now.

Pradeep Mathur, the fourth-term MLA from Mathura and deputy leader of the Congress Legislature Party, has reportedly pointed out this lapse relating to nomenclature to Sonia Gandhi. Sources say he pointed out that, while the Centre bears the entire cost of wages for unskilled manual workers, Mayawati is reaping the political benefits. As Rajiv Gandhi's name is not associated with the programme, its beneficiaries believe that it is Behenji's brain child and it is she who makes the payments to them.

Mathur's argument apparently convinced Sonia, who remarked that she could not possibly spoonfeed the programme's architects and that they should have applied political wisdom and foresight.

Power games
behind ntpc appointment

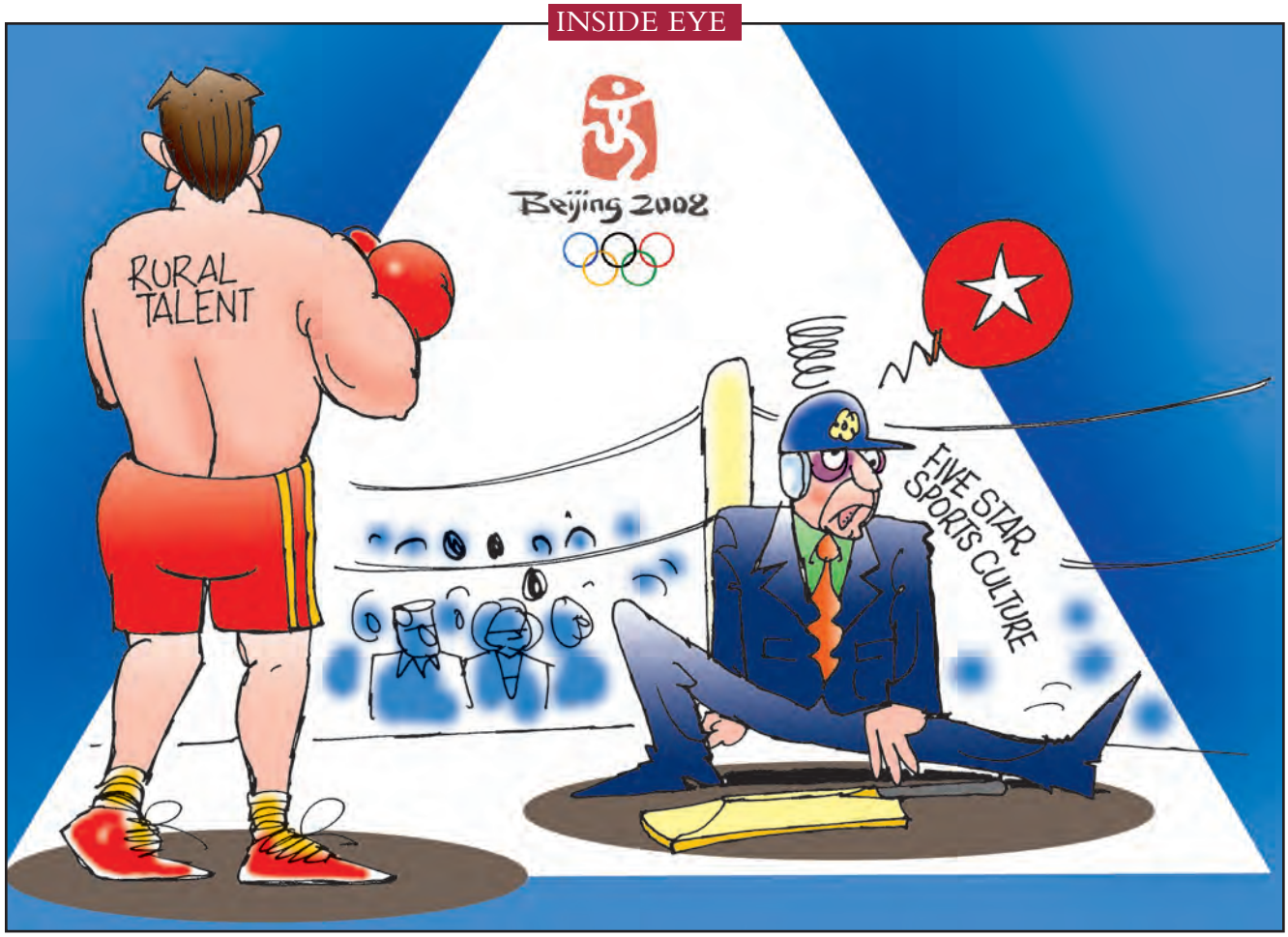
AFTER the Prime Minister's Office reportedly made clear, as early as December last year, that only technocrats should be considered to replace the outgoing Chairman-cum-Managing Director of the National Thermal Power Corporation, T Sankaralingam, the Power Ministry swung into action to find a suitable candidate.

The Public Selection Enterprise Board (PSEB) forwarded two departmental names–Chandan Roy, Director (Operations) and RS Sharma, Director (Commercial) with Roy being first choice. However, a powerful General Secretary of the Congress belonging to Madhya Pradesh met Sonia Gandhi along with Sharma and a Delhi-based journalist, and requested her to intervene on Sharma's behalf. According to sources, madam's response was not discouraging.

Then, a day before the Cabinet Committee of Approval was to give its nod to Roy's name, the same Power Ministry which had earlier recommended him did a *volte face* and opted for Sharma. The grapevine has it that an influential IAS officer from the Uttar Pradesh cadre and the Power Minister were summoned to 10 Janpath and the former asked to manage the appointment drill in favour of Sharma. And that is how Sharma came to head the Rs 30,000-crore turnover organization.

Z security for cash boxes!
commandoes delivered money to mps

THE media focus on Amar Singh and mentor Mulayam Singh Yadav over their reported involvement in the cash-for-votes scam to save the UPA government during the trust vote completely obscured the role played by the Chief Minister of a northern state. Now, while demand for



ILLUSTRATIONS: ARUNA

money can be created, it is supply that is of utmost importance. So this Chief Minister was entrusted with the security of the supply route by a powerful AICC office-bearer known for money management.

The hullabaloo created by the Opposition over buying of its MPs alerted those enamoured of sting operations and various other elements. This led to a comic situation: the security of the money during transfer became more important than the secrecy of the operation.

A Delhi-based facilitator was given custody of the cash-stuffed boxes and provided three police escort cars filled with commandoes by the Chief Minister for delivery at specified destinations. When the cavalcade entered the capital with siren hooting and lights flashing, its mission was no secret.

Somnath's nobility of spirit

tribute to chandra shekhar

Close on the heels of proving his mettle during the trust vote in Parliament, Lok Sabha Speaker Somnath Chatterjee has once again won hearts with his warm response to the proposal to honour the late Chandra Shekhar. Businessman Kamal Morarka, who was a Minister in the Chandra Shekhar Cabinet, met the Speaker last month with a request for installation of a statue of the former Prime Minister in the lawns of Parliament.

Chatterjee was immediately enthusiastic but lamented that there was no space left for such a statue. Then, fondly remembering his old colleague, he suggested that Morarka get a portrait of Chandra Shekhar done instead as that could be placed inside the Lok Sabha.

The proposal has been welcomed by all political parties and leaders. It is fitting that, while the no-confidence motion over the nuclear deal divided the House, the memory of the great Parliamentarian united its members. g

Sorry spectacle on DD

India's best-ever Olympics was the national broadcaster's worst-ever

THE top brass of Doordarshan has set yet another example of incompetence, and even the fact that Olympic coverage was at stake seemed no deterrent. The Olympics are as much a gruelling test for the media as for sportspersons. Doordarshan, being a member of the Asian Broadcasting Union (ABU), secured exclusive rights for Rs 15 crore – paid in advance. The event could have rejuvenated the dwindling figure of eyeballs for DD, especially during a Games at which India performed its best ever. But, despite sending a huge team of 72 people at a cost of approximately Rs 8 crore for coverage, DD has earned only criticism and castigation. Worse, with a total expenditure of Rs 23 crore, it barely managed to recover Rs 7 crore.

Advertisers and millions of viewers have resented the shoddy coverage, abysmal standard of commentary, unimaginative sidelights and poor selection of events. As if this were not enough, there were no arrangements for Grandstand at the CPC, New Delhi end. There were inexperienced anchors speaking breathlessly without substance, accompanied by insipid and outdated "experts" who, sources say, were forced upon DD by BS Lalli, the CEO. Many Indian events were interrupted for studio discussions which were of no relevance or interest. One Assistant Director, who was on leave, was hurriedly asked to take over just four days before the Games as everybody, including a Section Officer, was going to China! And, under-prepared and disoriented, he could not perform the task alone.

This was the first time that no pre-Games meeting was held to coordinate coverage and transmission. Only one such meeting was hurriedly held by the DDG-Sports and that too when the print media highlighted DD's obvious unpreparedness. But it was too late by then. The usual coordination between the programmers and technicians was missing and none knew what to do.

The entire operation was devised by Lalli in consultation with the DG and an officer, who had been ousted by the Minister from DD and sent to AIR, Tripura for utter inefficiency. None of the three has any experience in television, leave alone in the highly technical business of live telecast. Their lack of knowledge was exploited by the Technical Adviser to the CEO, who has been inducted from AIR but has no exposure in conducting telecasts of such magnitude.

Sterling performance, shoddy coverage

This was the first time that no pre-Games meeting was held to coordinate coverage and transmission

During its preparatory meeting, ABU had invited over 300 foreign delegates to Beijing to apprise them of the technicalities. The then CEO, a bureaucrat from the Tamil Nadu cadre, was accompanied by a Programme professional and cut an extremely sorry figure when asked what sound DD wanted. The ignorant bureaucrat declared, "We need Indian sound...we are Indians after all!" Expecting applause for this patriotic assertion, he failed to note the exchange of looks and murmuring that followed. The Director accompanying him tugged at his coat and whispered, "Sir, say 'customized feed with international sound'."

Earlier, Doordarshan would ask all private channels to submit their feed requirement. This was not done this time and hours of footage were used without payment. Prasar Bharati was advised by its Legal Coordinator to seek a legal injunction on the use of feed by other channels. It was struck down by the High Court. Earlier, the matter was handled by DD's Standing Counsel, a highly experienced and result-oriented lawyer who was ignored by the CEO this time round. Some say the CEO has engaged inexperienced lawyers close to his son from the latter's Law College days.

Too much bureaucratization of professional bodies like AIR and DD has led to their degeneration. It is said that the Organizing Committee for the Olympics in London in 2012 has decided to give telecast rights to ESPN and not Doordarshan! g

Independence Day fiasco

The camera was looking elsewhere while the national flag was unfurled

Bad miss at the Red Fort ceremony

IT'S an event every Prime Minister loves to do and be seen doing. But it was not to be for Dr Manmohan Singh on August 15, 2008 and, once again, it's all thanks to Doordarshan. While the nation sat glued to its TV sets to watch the live telecast on Independence Day from the Red Fort and to see the Tricolour being unfurled to the accompaniment of the soul-stirring national anthem, the DD camera was busy elsewhere. Unbelievably, it failed to catch the moment.

Our enquiries reveal that it was yet another case of a disjointed exercise handled by CEO BS Lalli himself. In fact, it is the CEO now who decides on films, serials, programmes, even guests to be invited. And none dare say a word contrary to his line of thinking. The consequences are there for all to see, including – ironically and pitifully – the entire nation.

Since the CEO interacts with the lowest-level officials, breaking the chain of command, there is utter confusion in the entire department. An important national telecast goes on air without any programme meeting being held by the DG or the DDG (North) – something unimaginable earlier. None of the officers visited the OB spot, a must for making arrangements for such an important telecast. The customary procedure for live coverage was not followed and no instructions were even issued.

Lalli centrallized every activity in his own hands, which kept the middle-rank staff – crucial for such important coverage – at a loose end. While he depended on the assurances of the subordinate staff anxious to please him, the Director of Delhi Kendra proceeded on leave. Even the most experienced hand in OB coverage, Mir Mushtaq, was taken off and the reins placed in the hands of an inexperienced staffer. The Deputy Director, an exponent of music, had no idea of such telecasts. Hence the fiasco.

In normal circumstances, the DG, DDG in charge, Kendra head, Chief Engineer and the Superintending Engineer are responsible if anything goes wrong but they are all having the last laugh since the CEO was spearheading the show.

Whatever anyone might say now, the Prime Minister was blacked out. Most shocking is that the CEO is once again being let off despite this display of lack of knowledge and inefficiency. Neither the Ministry nor the PMO, which would have hanged any other officer, has chosen to move against Lalli. Is it because he is close to the Prime Minister? Even so, what about professional and national honour? g

The writer is a former Senior Director, Doordarshan and can be reached at vinodkapoor5@rediffmail.com

Dedication in pursuit of excellence
Our environmental concerns:
Plantation of 8.5 million saplings covering 45 different species
Development of Sanjeevani Vana, a lush heaven on earth
Construction of the Lakya dam to prevent silts entering the River Bhadra
Environmental studies undertaken in collaboration with various universities
Restoration of near extinct plant species in the area
Ferns and grass planting in mine abandoned area
Numerous awards for environment protection measures including the FIM Environment Award 2005
The Kudremukh Iron Ore Company Limited
The Kudremukh Iron Ore Company Limited incorporated in 1976 has achieved the multiple objectives of ecological preservation, social betterment and the mining of iron ore. Giving a high level of priority to the environment and society, KIOCL has succeeded in long term restoration of the environment while paying heed to social obligations and taking steps to better the lives of people in the Kudremukh region.
First fully integrated operation in India stretching from the mine to the port and export markets.
First iron ore long distance slurry pumping operation in Asia, with a pipeline spanning 67 kilometers
First large scale magnetite iron ore mine in India
Our social obligations:
Financial assistance for the Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Bhavan and Samudhaya Bhavans at various socially and economically backward areas
Construction of school play grounds at Hirebile, Angadi, Niduvale and numerous other locations
Borewell and water supply for Samse Village and Nellibeedu Village
Infrastructure development in the form of roads across the area and bridges over the river Bhadra
Development and Maintenance of the Kendriya Vidyalaya.
KUDREMUKH
IRON ORE COMPANY LIMITED
(A Government of India Enterprise)
Regd. Office: II Block, Koramangala, Bangalore-560 034
AN ISO 9001:2000,14001:1996 & OHSAS 18001:1999 COMPANY
ECOLOGY–OUR MISSION OUR OBSESSION
Visit us at : www.kudremukhore.co.in

Call to conscience

A citizen's open letter to the bureaucracy of India

WHY is it that the credit for India's successful negotiation at the World Trade Organization goes solely to Commerce and Industry Minister Kamal Nath? No doubt, he has the gift of the gab coupled with the gall to take on the superpowers. Yet, have we paused to think at all of those who have put in the hard work in preparation for his line of fire? Those who burnt the midnight oil and made their families sacrifice too, so that the Minister was so thoroughly prepared that no one could take pot shots? Yes, I speak of the unsung heroes of our incredibly large "tainted' bureaucracy.

Is it not time, after six decades of independence, that we appraise these people who eschew the MNC culture and the fat pay packets of the private sector – at least till circumstances drive them out of the bhavans at a much later stage in life? Not all of them are chips of the same block, yet there are many worthy officers out there who we never hear of till a CBI inquiry brings him or her into the public domain, or, say, a forest officer takes on the politicians' system to prove his worth at the risk of losing all.

What is it that drives them? Most of them are as net- or tech-savvy as any netizen today. Many have talents which some of us would need a lifetime to acquire. There are those who complete PhDs while serving as Joint Secretaries. It is time the media gave them due recognition, instead of highlighting what MPs wore to Parliament. These unheralded people can bring about the change that India requires. There are many out there who, given a chance, would be the Munnabhais of government service.

Yet, something holds them back. Is it complacency, insecurity or a "why me" attitude? Does our officialdom not realize it is this that is making the boat sink, making them be less and less in control of governance while letting the politicians call the shots?

Why be pulled into the political quicksand in the process of governance? Let your conscience rise and rule. Let the citizens, who are in reality governed by you and your actions and thoughts, know that you are more than a mover of files. You need to prove that you have chosen the seat not to quench a thirst for power, but to make a difference in your lifetime. Make the citizens aware that you too have a conscience.

For sure you do not like the stained corridor leading to your office which looks like a public spittoon, whereas the ones leading to the higher seats of power are carpeted and lined with potted plants – showing that those are offices that matter, since that is where the "whites" still visit.

Let your conscience rise and rule. Let the citizens, who are in reality governed by you and your actions and thoughts, know that you are more than a mover of files

Your feelings of disgust and ennui are well known: you give vent to them outside your official circle.

But what have you done to change it? Ask yourself, what has education brought to you if you are unable to change something as simple as this. Can you not ensure that the receptionist/guard does not require a bribe to let people get to you? Why are you scared to face the nation and its people and show them that you matter where it counts?

Why is it that you do not walk across to the offices of your assistants, to see for yourself the mess they work in and what you can do about it? A lot, but for that you need to realize and resolve that you and every other person in your seats of power and governance are just as responsible for the mess in our Nirman Bhavans and Udyog Bhavans as the system. You need to realize that you are the system.

Start today for a better India tomorrow. g

Sarkari.com
sarkaritel.com
E-Info News India Specific Portal
Visit
http://www.sarkaritel.com
A web Portal
Providing Complete Information
on Government

ओएनजीसी
ONGC

ओएन जी सी की
प्रगति के ५२ वर्ष

ONGC - Beyond Hydrocarbons
We resolve to strive for Energy Independence

ONGC pioneered the nation's hydrocarbon exploration and energised its growth for more than half a century. Today, as India's only company to feature in the Fortune's 'Most Admired Companies' list, it has taken a giant leap forward for promoting sustainable growth and development by harnessing nature's alternative energy sources. ONGC intends to be carbon neutral and has invested substantially towards clean and renewable energy research.

» खोज के लिए साहस » श्रेष्ठता के लिए ज्ञान » उत्कृष्टता के लिए तकनीक

Subsidiaries | Joint Ventures

Regd. Office: Jeevan Bharati, Tower-II, 8th Floor, 124, Indira Chowk, New Delhi - 110001. Fax: 011- 23316413 Tel: 23301000, 23310156, 23721756 www.ongcindia.com

No populism, ple

The question is not of women's empowerment, but a serious one affecting

by Maj-Gen Mrinal Suman

THE armed forces are reportedly considering grant of permanent commission to women. During Question Hour on March 12 this year, the Defence Minister informed the Rajya Sabha that the question of granting permanent commission to women would be re-examined positively. "I understand the sentiments in an era of women's empowerment. Trends around the world are changing. The government will try its best to find a solution to the issue," he added.

It is unfortunate that the government has reduced such a serious matter to an issue of women's empowerment. All policy issues that concern the war potential of the armed forces must be dealt with in a dispassionate manner without succumbing to populist slogans like purging gender bias, women's liberation and conquering the last male bastion.

It was in 1990 that a decision was taken to grant Short Service Commission (SSC) to women in some select non-combat branches in the three services. The first batch joined in 1992. The current strength of women officers in the Army, Air Force and Navy is 4101, 784 and 252 respectively. These figures include Medical Corps, Dental Corps and Nursing Services wherein women are granted permanent commission (PC) as well.

The profession of arms is all about management of violence. Soldiers' behaviour, ethos and attitudes are conditioned accordingly. The environment tends to acquire a certain degree of coarseness which many consider to be alien to women. That is the reason even countries professing equality of the sexes are wary of pitching their women into direct combat. Despite the much-touted huge presence of women in the US forces in Iraq, there has not been a single woman casualty so far whereas over 3,000 men have died.

By the parameters cited (*box alongside*),

Points to ponder

Although women have been serving in the militaries of developed countries for a long time, they are still grappling with various functional, social, behavioural and psychological issues. Women's absorption and adjustment has not been smooth in any military. However, with the deep understanding acquired over a period of time, it is now universally accepted that the extent of women's induction in any military must be dictated by these parameters:

- What is the degree of shortage of suitable male volunteers? Some countries have to recruit women to make up deficiencies.
- Is the military technologically advanced enough to generate considerable requirement for highly skilled women for high-tech non-combat support functions? Low-tech militaries are always manpower-intensive and depend on extensive physical ground effort, and hence do not lend themselves to useful employment of women.
- Have the societal and cultural ethos reached a stage of maturity to facilitate integration of men and women to the desired levels of mutual comfort? It has been seen that traditional societies suffer from sexual prejudices and inhibit smooth induction of women in male majority organizations.
- What is the degree of involvement of a military in active combat duties? Countries with secure borders and peaceful environment (like Canada) can accommodate more women in their militaries and assign passive duties to them. On the other hand, militaries of countries facing hostile external and internal environment are hard-pressed to find safe appointments for women.

ase!

the nation's security

Women soldiers: right environment?

India does not lend itself to induction of women in the services. First, it is not short of suitable male volunteers. Second, it is still a second-generation technology force which is trying desperately to upgrade. Therefore, the number of high-tech appointments available is limited. Third, Indian society is passing through a phase of transition from traditionalism to modernity. The Indian soldier is drawn from rustic stock where women to date are assigned a lesser status. Last, and most important, a majority of Army troops are deployed in active combat duties and there are few soft appointments and peace stations.

Notwithstanding the public posturing, overall feedback with the experience of the past 15 years has been mixed. Though commanders admire women for commitment, sincerity and enthusiasm, they show reluctance to have women under their command due to concern for their safety and dignity. It is not a question of chauvinistic male bias. It is just that they tend to be overcautious in assigning duties to women lest they be exposed to harm.

"Women want equality only in officer cadre and not in other ranks" is an oft-heard remark. In all other countries, women are inducted both as officers and soldiers. India takes women only in the officer cadre. This is a major anomaly and a cause of concern for many officers. The Indian armed forces pride themselves on the fact that officers lead from the front and hence have to be better than their soldiers in all respects. Officers earn the right to command troops by excelling both physically and professionally. But, by having women only in the officer cadre, an impression gets conveyed that officers' duties are soft and can be carried out by women as well.

The standard for selection of women has been kept at a pedestrian level with the result that many women find it difficult to withstand prolonged physical and mental pressure of the service. Concerns have been expressed about the physical fitness of women officers and their being highly prone to back problems, pelvic injuries and stress fractures.

MOST male officers understand and appreciate challenges faced by women in trying to adjust to a male-dominated environment. However, some feel that presence of women amongst them tends to make the environment "formal and stiff". They miss the light-hearted banter which all militaries consider essential to release work tension and promote group cohesion. In some establishments, mutual comfort level between men and women colleagues has been found to be low. In a few cases, male officers have been seen to be resenting additional work load that they have to undertake as many tasks (like patrolling, night duty checks) cannot be assigned to women.

As regards feedback from women, most feel that their talent is not given due recognition and their competence remains under-utilized. As they cannot be assigned highly active duties, they get routine desk and administrative jobs which they resent. Many complain about lack of job satisfaction. Moreover, they feel that they have to work twice as hard as men to prove their worth. g

Officers earn the right to command troops by excelling both physically and professionally. By having women only in the officer cadre, an impression gets conveyed that officers' duties are soft

The way forward

India is proud of the fact that women in the Indian services are being treated in a manner befitting their dignity and self-respect, despite the traditional social background of the Indian soldier. India should adopt a graduated and incremental approach:

- Women should continue to serve in the Medical, Dental and Nursing Services both in SSC and PC streams as at present. They have been performing creditably.
- Education and Legal branches should also be opened to women both in SSC and PC cadres.
- Women's competence and expertise can also be harnessed in other non-combat streams like the Survey of India, militarized cadre of the Military Engineering Service and the Directorate General of Quality Assurance. They should be offered both SSC and PC options.

The current policy of non-induction of women in combat arms should continue. Their entry into Engineers, Signals, Supply Corps and Ordnance (and equivalent branches of the Air Force and the Navy) should be deferred for the time being both for PC and SSC. The policy could be reviewed after a few years, once the environment becomes more conducive for their productive employment.

At long last, a step forward!

DPP-2008 is an evolving document that, for all its plus points, contains many dualities

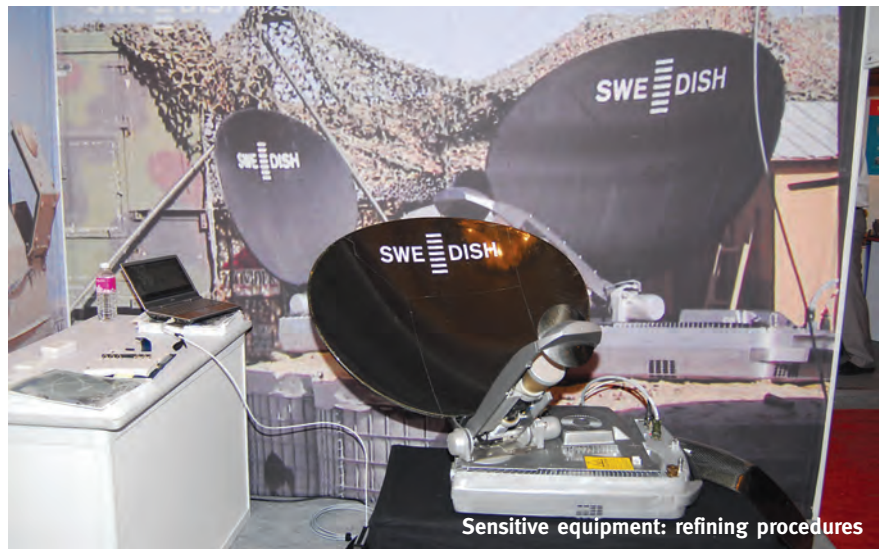
by Deba R Mohanty

THE much-awaited revised defence procurement procedure – DPP-2008 – that was officially unveiled by Defence Minister AK Antony on August 1 is considered an improvement on the previous one, but may not be an ultimate procedural (not policy) document to address the inherent problems in the world of military procurement. As the Minister admitted, this document is still in an early phase of evolution, and will be refined.

India's defence sector has long been under an autarkic model vigorously guarded by what may be termed a "golden quadrangle" of political executives, civil bureaucracy, armed forces and the defence scientific community. Obviously, strategic decisions in this sector would follow a non-transparent manner, often justified on national security grounds.

This has led to a situation where defence issues are seldom debated, in Parliament or elsewhere, the defence budget is passed without any autopsy, transparency eludes engaged citizenry in every aspect of the military domain while middlemen become a constant in big-ticket military purchase deals. Long-nurtured vertical institutional structures within the Ministry of Defence (MoD) with little or no horizontal interaction among different departments and armed forces headquarters, have perpetuated a system that has furthered interest group politics, which would obviously resist reforms from within or without.

For justifiable reasons, India opened up its defence sector for private sector participation while bringing in institutional-level reforms in higher defence management since 2002. Military procurement is one area where many deliberations have taken place since. Consider this: until 2002, India was following an almost unchanged procurement procedure, while in the past six years it has undergone three revisions! While this evolutionary process has certainly brought in many positive points, it still grapples with intricate issues that are not only procedural but also systemic.



Sensitive equipment: refining procedures

On the positive side, DPP-2008 entails the following. First, it clarifies distinctions between normal and extraordinary military procurement procedures. The former requires a standard procedure in a prescribed format, the latter will be routed through what is known as "first track procedure". Second, "request for proposal" (RFP) will now have an elaborate format— technical and commercial requisites in a detailed manner to enable vendors to know what exactly the end-user wants.

Third, it tries to streamline evaluation procedures – technical, field and commercial – for large military acquisitions to avoid delays. It also tries to put a realistic timeframe for each acquisition, depending on the nature and size of requirement. Fourth, it tries to avoid a single-vendor situation by injecting competition right from the "request for information" to "solicitation of offer". Fifth, it tries to distill "required" and "desirable" military technologies from a whole basket of choices now available by stipulating that all requirements will be examined by defence production, procurement and R&D boards, and final choices will be approved by the Defence Acquisition Council. This will not only rationalize requirements but also help choose which product to buy and which to develop through indigenous or joint efforts. Last but not least, it lays emphasis on offset obligations for vendors primarily through transfer of technology (ToT) routes.

However, these same provisions contain complexities that need in-depth examination and would necessitate further refinement. First, it is not the normal acquisition but exigency-based acquisition which would invite suspicion. India has recently scrapped a couple of acquisitions (artillery guns and, more recently, 197 helicopters) on grounds of irregularities. As these are crucial components of the on-going military modernization plans, fresh acquisitions would need first track procurement. On the other hand, decisions to purchase items like Hercules and P-8 maritime reconnaissance aircraft from the US government through the Letters of Acceptance route could bring

India's defence sector has long been under an autarkic model vigorously guarded by what may be termed a 'golden quadrangle'

into question the wisdom of the government. Adequate scrutiny as well as explanations before crucial purchases is necessary to avoid raised eyebrows.

Second, under normal conditions vendors know what the end-user wants as all essentials are elaborated in the RFP. However, what prospective vendors need to know is the nature, size and qualitative aspects of the Indian defence market. An adequate roadmap of military acquisitions is thus necessary to attract the best of companies and also create space for them for a long-term stake in the Indian defence industry. Third, time line is still a challenge for Indian planners and the integrated defence staff office as well as civil bureaucracy must take steps to avoid delays.

FOURTH, the evaluation process in India is lengthy as systems go through rigorous evaluations under different climatic conditions. However, eleven steps to military acquisition still have scope for time reductions. A re-look is advisable at steps like initial screening, technical and staff evaluations, commercial negotiations–a time-frame for which should be set at the outset.

Also, provisions like offsets and transfer of technology should be clearly laid down. At the moment, vendors remain clueless about offset obligation modalities. At the same time, the DPP states that ToT provisions under offset obligations will follow licence production routes. This defeats the very purpose of offsets, which is three-fold: bringing back a portion of money spent on acquisition through industrial compensation routes, helping the Indian defence industry raise its standard, and achieving self-reliance in military technology through collaborative as well as indigenous efforts.

While offsets could bring in desired results in acquisition costs as well as help build defence industrial infrastructure, one is unsure whether the domestic standard in critical military technologies would be raised. There is a need to link ToT as a mandatory component in offsets, where aspects of technology transfers should be clearly laid down. This may not please foreign vendors but is essential to enhance the level of self-reliance. g

The author is a Senior Fellow in Security Studies at the Observer Research Foundation. The views expressed are personal.

community radio | abhilaksh likhi

A new charter

Exploring a fresh approach to participatory governance

Abhilaksh Likhi, a 1991- batch IAS officer of the Haryana cadre, presented a paper on "Community Radio in Rural India: Forging a Public-Private Partnership to Empower Civil Society" at the Third International Conference on Public Policy and Management. Organized by the Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore over August 3-6, the conference was attended by scholars, experts and practitioners from Asia, North America and Europe. Out of 160 papers presented, 115 were on two major themes – public-private partnerships and urban governance.

Likhi's paper focuses attention on the struggle of marginalized communities in rural India to create democratic media systems as transnational organizations consolidate their control of the global mediascape. It also examines in today's digital scenario the different ways in which rural communities are accessing various media technologies such as radio, television, print and computer networks for the purpose of community communication.

Through illustration of local initiatives in the rural landscape, Likhi attempts to specifically fathom the relevance of a medium like community radio. His study investigates the communication practices of various civil society organizations that have been using community radio as a means for empowerment at the grassroots. More important, in the context of the new guidelines for community radio, it explores an appropriate framework for participatory governance involving various stakeholders including the constitutionally mandated rural local self-governance bodies.

Likhi's paper focuses attention on the struggle of marginalized rural communities

Finally, in the backdrop of changing regulatory communication policies the world over, Likhi argues in support of the role community radio can play in building capacities of non-literate and marginalized communities. He also suggests viable broadcasting technology options in rural India to enhance livelihood security.

Likhi is currently pursuing a PhD at the Kidwai Centre for Mass Communication Research, Jamia Millia Islamia University, New Delhi in the area of community media. He has extensive field experience in implementing the information, education and communication (IEC) component of various rural development and poverty alleviation programmes in the Government of Haryana. As Deputy Commissioner of Kurukshetra, he successfully implemented a communication plan to create a niche market for the city as a heritage destination.

In 2004, he was awarded a year-long Fulbright grant under the Hubert H Humphrey Fellowship Programme to study "Public Broadcasting and Communication Management" at the College of Communication, Boston University. During the fellowship year, he wrote, narrated and directed a video film, *Soul Searching*, that explores the dynamics of inter-cultural communication. He also interned at Boston's premium cable channel, CN-8, to produce and direct a news story titled *Emily – The Cow*. He has been regularly publishing papers, field studies and articles in reputed journals/newspapers on the role of community media forms in empowering marginalized rural communities through public-private partnerships and local self-governance. He is currently Personal Secretary to the Union Minister of State for Defence Production, Ministry of Defence in New Delhi. g

The regulator, set up for investor protection, s

Whose side is SEBI on?

GFILES BUREAU

THE Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) was constituted with the sole objective of protecting the interests of investors in securities. Its main function was to promote and regulate the securities market that would play an ethical role in a healthy economy as well as ensure the investor's interest. However, after over one-and-a-half decades of its existence, it appears to be a shattered dream. The small investors—the real investors—are a disillusioned lot as they feel that the regulator has promoted the interests of the big companies and intermediaries known for their clout in the corridors of power.

An analysis of a few recent controversies in the stock market is an eye-opener. The regulator seems to don kid gloves when it comes to taking action against the big fish; only the small fry is targeted. In the much-publicized 2007-IPO scam, small stockbrokers like Rupalben Panchal were indicted while the likes of India Bulls were exonerated without any delay.

Witness SEBI conduct in the cases involving corporate giants like DLF Limited, Reliance Industries, Reliance Power and IFCI. DLF allegedly denied its minority shareholders allotment of debentures by way of a rights issue and their subsequent conversion into shares and bonus shares unlawfully. The company indulged in deliberate misstatement in the offer document for the rights issue of debentures. Its draft Red Herring Prospectus had to be withdrawn for factual discrepancies. The company sought SEBI's clearance for its planned mega IPO while a large number of complaints by minority shareholders were pending. The issue was raised in the High Court of Delhi by the Society for Consumers' and Investors' Protection (SCIP) through a writ petition.

Interestingly, the company, in a hurriedly convened Extraordinary General Body Meeting (EGM) on November 14, 2006, made the allotment of debentures to all those minority shareholders who were unlawfully denied the same while SEBI's lawyers pleaded that the case was outside their purview since the complaints belonged to the period when the company was not a listed entity. The court, in its final order dated 14.05.2007, observed: "Investors made complaints to the Government and SEBI alleging gross violation of the provisions of law and irregularities apart from fraudulent purchase and sale of shares and issue of debentures which have not evoked any response either from SEBI or from the Government, no matter both of them have the jurisdiction and are duty bound to entertain the same for suitable action against the company".

Lawyer-cum-politician Arun Jaitley and Arun Bhardwaj, son of Union Law Minister Hansraj Bhardwaj, appeared for DLF. They argued that the government had already examined and disposed of these complaints. They also questioned the Society's credentials and its intention in approaching the court as if to do so is the sole right of the influential and rich. The Court, however, observed: "The law cannot countenance a situation where a citizen has a legitimate complaint to make but there is no efficacious remedy or redress for the same. It would not allow a wrong to go unremedied. Regardless of whether or not the complainants succeed in getting any relief in the ultimate analysis, they have the right to invoke the jurisdiction of the competent authority who is duty bound to deal with the complaint fairly and in accordance with law."

On the direction of the Court, the Society presented the complaints of the investors in a consolidated manner for consideration of the government and SEBI. However, SEBI decided to ignore the complaints and allow DLF to go ahead with its IPO. Even the final order of SEBI on the grievances such as alleged insider trading and the like had a number of inconsistencies. The Society's RTI application requesting examination of the file/documents leading to the said conclusion was turned down by SEBI. A subsequent appeal to the appellate authority was also unfruitful.

In this context, the recent revamp by SEBI of its organizational structure by separating investigation and adjudication wings, assigning each one under a different member of the Board, may at best be only a cosmetic innovation since the two will essentially continue to function under the same system.

SEBI acted as a postman and not as a regulator. Whatever complaints it received were merely sent to Reliance Power

Another case is the alleged insider trading in the shares of Reliance Petroleum Ltd (RPL) by Reliance Industries (RIL) in November 2007. The price of RPL surged to Rs 295 per share on November 1, 2007 (a rise of almost 47 per cent in just four trading sessions). This exceptional surge was caused by rumours that Chevron, a US petroleum giant, was close to buying a 21 per cent stake in RPL for over $6 billion (about Rs 24,000 crore). The rumours were subsequently denied by Chevron but no clarification whatsoever was offered by RIL. On November 23, RIL announced the sale of 18.04 crore shares of RPL (about 4 per cent of RIL's holding of 75 per cent) for Rs 4,023 crore, with an average price of Rs 223 per share only. The sale was conducted through the

seems wary of acting against corporate giants

open market on November 14 and 23.

Between November 1 and 6, huge "short" positions were created in RPL in the Futures & Options (F&O) segment. The open interest position of RPL increased from 8 crore shares (on Nov 1) to 16.22 crore shares (on Nov 6) – an increase of over Rs 2,000 crore in market value. The F&O positions crossed 95 per cent of marketwide positions leading to a ban on the counter at the National Stock Exchange. The margin requirements alone for creating such a huge position would have been around Rs 1,000 crore. Obviously, only an insider having knowledge of the proposed sale could have taken such a huge position, which is estimated to have generated profits to the extent of Rs 1,000 crore.

SEBI appears to be ignoring the questionable practices of the Ambani brothers in the stock market. While Mukesh Ambani is reportedly involved in insider trading, hammering the stock of Anil Ambani group companies, Anil Ambani is indulging in gross violation of various provisions of SEBI with regard to the Reliance Power IPO, according to sources.

The recent revamp by SEBI of its structure by separating investigation and adjudication wings may at best be only a cosmetic innovation

Anil Ambani, through his AAA Project Ventures and Reliance Energy Ltd (REL), got allotted 105 crore shares on September 30, 2007, reportedly through a bogus merger. There are specific provisions to check abuse by promoters for allotting shares to themselves for considerations other than cash, by merger schemes, allotment of bonus shares out of revaluation reserves (ie reserves not earned in cash) and or any other manner other than for cash within three years prior to public issue. The only exception to this is when a merger scheme is sanctioned by a High Court. This provision has been made to take care of genuine mergers and acquisitions which may have taken place before the public issues.

The Anil Ambani group had an existing company called Reliance Public Utility Pvt Ltd (RPUPL) which had paid-up capital of Rs 1 lakh. The authorized capital of RPUPL was suddenly increased to Rs 1000 crore by a resolution dated July 30, 2007. Anil's personal investment company and REL (controlled by him) invested Rs 500 crore each on August 3, 2007 in equity capital of RPUPL – a shell company with just Rs 1,000-crore share capital and Rs 1,000-crore investments. RPUPL and Reliance Power Ltd passed necessary board resolutions for merger of RPUPL into Reliance Power. The rationale of the scheme of amalgamation was stated as follows: "RPUPL has put in considerable efforts in acquiring necessary technical and manpower skills which are ancillary to the business of Reliance Power Ltd which can take benefits of these specialized skills and technology available with RPUPL to undertake mega power projects and implement them more efficiently and successfully."

The moot question was – from where did the shell company, having only Rs 1 lakh paid-up capital till July 31, 2007, acquire skills and technology to implement mega power projects? The simple logic is that since Anil Ambani did not want to risk his own money, he successfully passed on the risk to Indian investors. There were a large number of complaints with regard to other questionable issues, including valuation of the company and pricing of the IPO, that SEBI should have probed. When the Income Tax Department can question a Rs 1,000-crore application put up by actor Abhishek Bachchan, what prevents SEBI from probing the IPO of Reliance Power in the larger public interest?

SEBI acted as a postman and not as a regulator. Whatever complaints it received were merely sent to Reliance Power. The complaints, rather than being replied to by SEBI, were replied to by the management of Reliance Power. The tone and tenor of these replies left the investor-activists helpless and puzzled. SEBI, for all practical purposes, appeared to be helping the cause of Reliance Power instead of protecting the interest of investors.

Grahak Suraksha Mandal, a Rajkot-based NGO, filed a PIL in Gujarat High Court to stay the IPO of the company till SEBI investigated the entire matter. In an appeal filed by the company in the Supreme Court, its senior advocate, Harish Salve, pleaded that the PIL was motivated and was a blackmail strategy. He said, "The IPO cannot be reversed as it would affect the capital market." Ironically, he was right. We all witnessed the havoc caused by this IPO in the market. And the distress caused to the allottees in the said IPO is best not brought up.

Against this backdrop, there is an urgent need to discuss the role of regulatory and quasi-judicial bodies with relation to corporate giants. The investor activism in the country – a precondition for the growth of healthy capital markets – is set for a bleak future if the regulator and the judiciary display a hesitancy to call a spade a spade. The observations made by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Law and Justice in its recent report are very apt in this context: "The Supreme Court should set an example by delivering quick justice to the common people. The notion that only rich and powerful can get relief from the highest court of the country needs to be dispelled at the earliest." g

MAYA

An exclusive behind-the-scenes look at the courtiers who enforce Mayawati's iron-fisted rule over the state's bureaucracy

by Tara Patkar

IT was a scorcher of an election in May 2007 that saw the voters of India's most populous state, Uttar Pradesh, give a majority to a single party after 17 years. That party was the Bahujan Samaj Party and its leader, the driving force that tilted the balance so favourably, Dalit leader Mayawati. She was given the mandate so decisively in the hope that she would bring about an improvement in the state's law and order situation.

Starting off promisingly, Mayawati did fulfil hopes of a stern administration during her fourth tenure as Chief Minister – even imprisoning her party MP, Uma Kant Yadav. She began clearing the backlog in Scheduled Caste recruitment for government departments and started several housing schemes for the poor. She also started development projects for Ambedkar villages and forced the police to register FIRs by Dalits on priority throughout the state. The number of cases of Dalit atrocities on record jumped, alarming the National Commission for Scheduled Castes! Dalit officers secured prime posts in the police and other administrative sectors, too.

The new Chief Minister also started the Thana Diwas on Saturdays, under which citizens could take any problem, even if not of a police nature, to the nearest police station where important departments' officials would attend to them.

Yet, she soon began to draw criticism for spawning controversy rather than delivering governance. The resignation of the Chief Secretary after finding it impossible to work with the Cabinet Secretary, the renewal of Ambedkar Park and installation of her statue were unnecessary controversies.

But, in an incredible turn of events, as the Opposition attempted to close ranks ahead of the trust vote in Parliament on July 22 this year, she emerged its strongest contender for Prime Ministership. Though the UPA government won, Mayawati is yet to wake up from her unheralded dream. She now perceives her security threat as akin to that of a Prime Minister's. At her August 9 rally, she spoke of apprehensions that she would be murdered by her political opponents with the help of terrorists and Naxalites. Her aides were instructed to beef up her personal security.

This new-found status in her own eyes has shifted her focus away entirely from such matters as the much-awaited *janata durbar* for redressal of the public's grievances. Unbelievably, most employees of the Chief Minister's Office cannot enter without special permission.

The media faces unprecedented restrictions. For the first time, journalists are denied access to the fifth floor of the Secretariat, the nerve centre of the state's governance. Since its installation, the Mayawati government has shown scant respect for the fourth pillar of democracy. An editor of a reputed English daily lost his job after incurring her wrath. Media houses that are also involved in other business are being particularly targetted. An undeclared censorship holds sway.

The subjugation of Uttar Pradesh's higher bureaucracy to Chief Minister Mayawati's political diktats is virtually complete. It has no parallel. And IAS and IPS officers have given up even a pretence of independence. It is now common knowledge within the state that a District Magistrate, within the first week of his new posting, rather than plunging headlong into administrative and developmental tasks, awaits instructions from Lucknow on priorities: how many gun licences to be issued, which contractors to be favoured, which MLA, *zila parishad* chief, or local politico not to be touched, which Block Development Officer (BDO) to be asked to fall in line, which *gram panchayat* to receive money. Without demur, the Mussoorie-trained civil servant, heedless of rules and legalities, completes the Lucknow-dictated quota of assignments during a short-lived tenure.

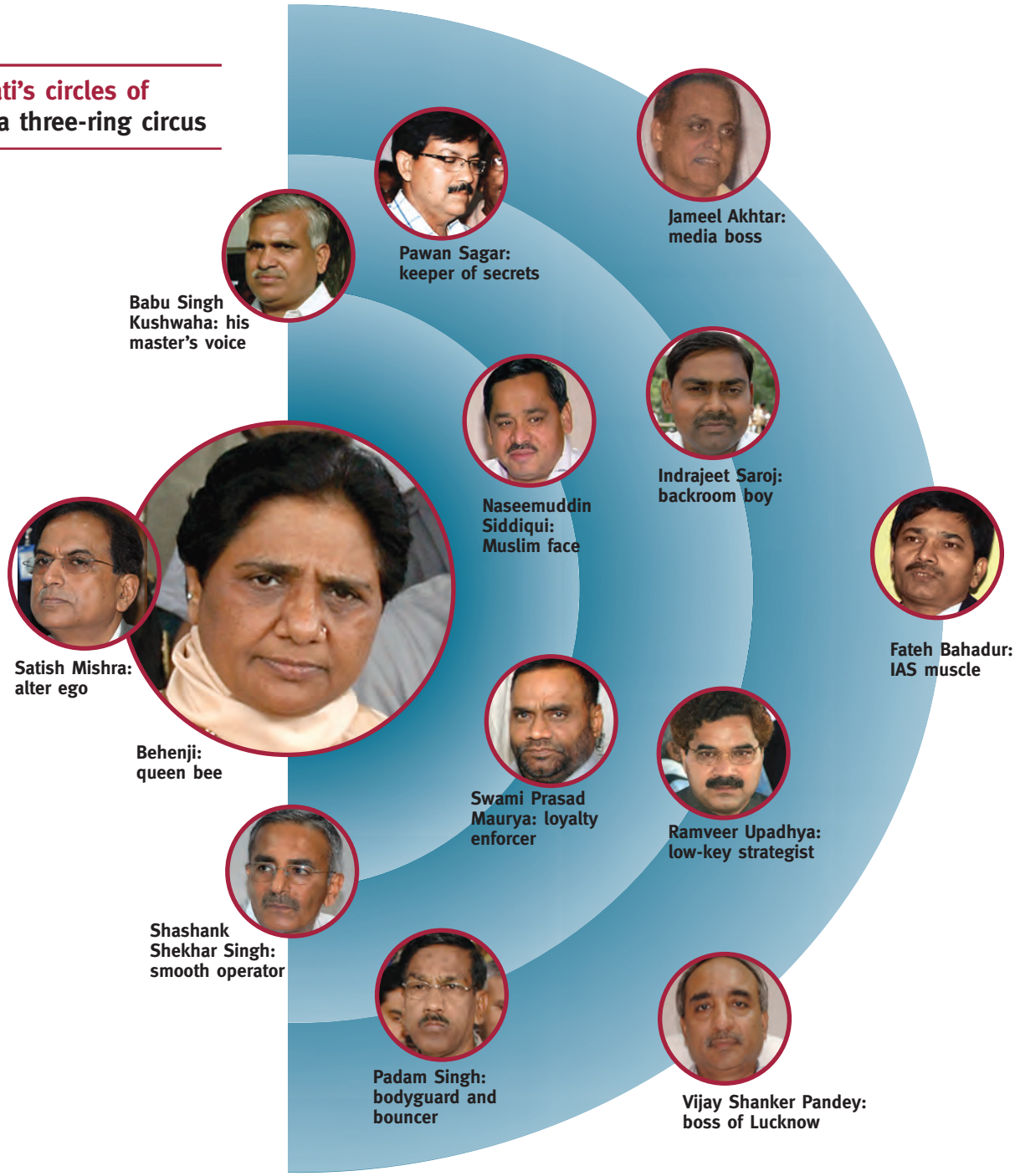
This 'responsiveness raj' – in which Big Behenji is Watching from every corner billboard and poster – is being orchestrated by a formidable politician-bureaucrat team operating from Lucknow's Kalidas Marg

This "responsiveness raj" – in which Big Behenji is Watching from every corner billboard and poster – is being orchestrated by a formidable politician-bureaucrat team operating from Lucknow's Kalidas Marg that has become the superpower street of Uttar Pradesh.

Mayawati's functioning style is heavily dependent on aides and satraps. Four bungalows on Kalidas Marg currently constitute the geographical power centre, as it were, of UP. No. 5 is the most powerful address in the state, being the residence of Chief Minister Mayawati, while 6,7 and 8 belong to Babu Singh Kushwaha, Naseemuddin Siddiqui and Swami Prasad Maurya – her most trusted lieutenants during all her four tenures in office. Ironically, no one in this epicentre of power, including the Chief Minister, is a directly elected representative of the people; they are all members of the Assembly's Upper House, the Legislative

MAHAL

Mayawati's circles of power: a three-ring circus


Jameel Akhtar: media boss
Pawan Sagar: keeper of secrets
Babu Singh Kushwaha: his master's voice
Naseemuddin Siddiqui: Muslim face
Indrajeet Saroj: backroom boy
Satish Mishra: alter ego
Behenji: queen bee
Fateh Bahadur: IAS muscle
Swami Prasad Maurya: loyalty enforcer
Ramveer Upadhya: low-key strategist
Shashank Shekhar Singh: smooth operator
Padam Singh: bodyguard and bouncer
Vijay Shanker Pandey: boss of Lucknow

Council.

The next most faithful of the Mayawati aides is the trio of her security officer, DSP Padam Singh, her Officer on Special Duty (OSD) Pawan Sagar, and the caretaker of her residence on New Delhi's Humayun Road, Ambed Rajan.

Few people know and understand Mayawati as well as Padam Singh. He has held his post from the beginning, even refusing promotion in order to stay on. Pawan Sagar was OSD during her last tenure, too, during which his wife, Punam Sagar, was awarded (or rewarded, as many emphasize) with the coveted post of Chairperson of the State Commission for Women. Ambed Rajan is another long-timer, having been with Mayawati for over a decade.

However, it is also true that, during each tenure, some new faces have made their entry into her inner circle but only for short spans – with the exception of bureaucrat PL Puniya who was her Principal Secretary several times. Surprisingly, after retirement he joined the Congress and unsuccessfully contested the Assembly election from Fatehpur.

The newcomers who have entrenched themselves this time round are Satish Chandra Mishra and Shashank Shekhar Singh.The former is a lawyer of repute who has been handling all her legal matters, including the Taj Corridor case. As Advocate-General during Mayawati's third tenure, he was famously the only person who could meet her without seeking Puniya's permission. Now he is national General Secretary of the Bahujan Samaj Party and Chairman of the State Advisory Council, besides being a Rajya Sabha MP.

Mishra is universally acknowledged as the state's most powerful person after Mayawati. His cousin, Abha Agnihotri, is the current Chairperson of the State Commission for Women, while elder brother VC Mishra, a retired High Court Judge, has been appointed Chairperson of the state Law Commission. Two Mishra associates, Nakul Dubey and Anant Kumar Mishra, are Cabinet Ministers. Mishra is also credited with being the real face of Mayawati's *Sarvajan Samaj* formula.

Shashank Shekhar Singh's well known journey from being a pilot to current Cabinet Secretary began with former Governor Romesh Bhandari, who made him his Secretary. Thereafter, Singh headed 18 departments as a Principal Secretary and became UP's seniormost bureaucrat. He was also appointed Chairman and Managing Director of Indian Airlines but the state government did not permit him to go to Delhi on deputation. Now, he is one of Mayawati's confidants. A few months ago, Chief Secretary PK Mishra resigned after a power struggle with Singh.

The subjugation of Uttar Pradesh's higher bureaucracy to Chief Minister Mayawati's political diktats is virtually complete. It has no parallel

Mayawati: mounting ambitions

Among other influential figures is Principal Secretary to the Chief Minister Vijay Shanker Pandey. The IAS 1979-batch Pandey is also Commissioner of Lucknow Division, Chairman of the Lucknow Development Authority, and Principal Secretary, Information. He formed the IAS Action Group in 1995 and created a furore by singling out the three most corrupt IAS officers – AP Singh, Neera Yadav and Brijendra.

Then there are Media Adviser Jameel Akhtar, VN Garg, Navneet Sehgal, DGP Vikram Singh and IG, Lucknow zone AK Jain. Two IAS officers, Netram and Kunwar Fateh Bahadur, were Secretary to CM in the last government and are now Principal Secretary to CM and Principal Secretary, Home, respectively.

On August 9, the maverick Mayawati announced that she had chosen her successor. Dramatically, she said the name had been written on the party's letterhead and handed to her two closest confidants, and would only be disclosed after her death. This spawned a flurry of speculation, about the identity of both the mysterious heir and the two confidants. The names of Mishra, Babu Singh Kushwaha and Swami Prasad Maurya were bandied about in a futile guessing game.

Her political persona apart, Mayawati is almost girlish in her weakness for expensive jewellery and would travel to Delhi's Imperial Hotel for hair and beauty care. Now, it is Punam Sagar who is her beautician. She likes to wear pink, yellow and cream-coloured salwar suits and reportedly has 70 dupattas for one suit.

She gets up before 6 am and works over 18 hours every day. She keeps a tab on TV news channels while dealing with work. She has been vegetarian for the past six years. Severely allergic, she has to take medication when moving around in public and uses a separate microphone while another one is provided for other leaders alongside. g

Decentralization farce

Elements of basic governance are being trashed at every turn

by MG Devasahayam

THE term "governance" refers to the decision-making and implementation processes in the administration of a country, state or organization. At the country/state level, governance is the exercise of political, economic and administrative authority in the management of multifarious affairs.

In the ancient days of *raja*s and *maharaja*s, Kautilya's *Arthashastra* was the *Magna Carta* of governance. This *magnum opus* elaborates the traits of a good ruler: "In the happiness of his subjects lies the king's happiness, in their welfare his welfare. He shall not consider as good only that which pleases him but treat as beneficial to him whatever pleases his subjects."

Kautilya's *raja*s provided "despotic yet benevolent governance" and for thousands of years our tradition of government has been that of "Raja and Praja". Everything came from the top and was never questioned. It was normal for the king and his courtiers to demand and accept presents or gifts in return for favours done.

With such a mindset prevailing among a majority of the population even after independence, India's democracy has never really been a "government of the people, by the people and for the people". This has been fully exploited by post-Independence satraps to practise pseudo-democracy wherein what is beneficial to them and their family alone matters!

For thousands of years our tradition of government has been that of 'Raja and Praja'. Everything came from the top and was never questioned

In the event, during the last half-century, governance has diminished and conflicts have risen. Justice, ridden with corruption and exorbitant cost, has become a rare commodity. The resultant discontent that could lead to rebellion, anarchy, and chaos, has many reasons. Chief among them was the lack of grassroot democracy in India's Constitution.

"Objectives Resolution", moved by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in December 1946, called for a Constitution "wherein all power and authority of the Sovereign Independent India, its constituent parts and organs of government, are derived from the people". This reflected Gandhi's description of *swaraj* in 1922 as merely a "courteous ratification of the declared wish of the people of India". Visions of these founding fathers envisaged a people-based governance with a bottom-up process that would give everyone "a place in the sun".

But when it was adopted, the Constitution concentrated political and economic powers with the Central government, devolving some to the states to maintain a federal facade. None was given to the grassroot entities of district and village. The founding fathers' aspiration of "making the people as the source of all power and authority", which is the basic tenet of any democracy, stood betrayed.

Nearly four decades later, Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi condescendingly agreed to "devolve power to the people", indeed a cruel joke on the basic tenet of democracy! It took a few more years and another Prime Minister (PV Narasimha Rao) to make the 73rd and 74th Amendments to the Constitution for establishing and empowering Panchayati Raj institutions. These amendments, barring exceptions, still remain only on paper.

Under the circumstances, the unenviable task of delivering decentralized governance fell on the shoulders of India's civil services. Post-Independence, the colonial administrative structure, with IAS and IPS at the core, continued unaltered. The people of a free nation looked upon these elite services as the bulwark of the administrative system whose main task was to give good and honest governance to all citizens and uplift the poor and the downtrodden. To facilitate performance of this momentous task without fear or favour, these services were covenanted in the Constitution, a privilege not available anywhere else in the world!

Rajiv Gandhi: dreams of panchayati raj

For a nation of 110 crore people with 70 per cent of the *aam aadmi* living hand to mouth, governance has a very distinct connotation. It is not facilitating a "billionaire economy" through globalization, with some crumbs trickling down. It is basic governance – creating and sustaining an ambience and atmosphere for the common man to work and live with equity, safety, security and dignity. Tragically, at grassroots level, these elements of basic governance are being trashed at every turn.

These two agenda – global felicitation and basic governance – have come into conflict and most of the management-savvy mandarins are favouring the former and spurning the latter. IAS incumbents have little patience with tackling burning and basic issues like corruption, injustice and inequality, which concern the common man. They are more comfortable with cozy jobs in state industrial and commercial sectors as well as Central economic ministries and the benefits that flow. And the IPS is not far behind. Are the services abandoning the basics for which they were covenanted? g

A Report Card

Why is it that sincere Members of Parliam

by Girish Nikam

A STUDY of the attendance record of the MPs of both Houses of Parliament conducted some time back yielded interesting statistics. The survey would not have been possible but for the persistence of a band of young men and women who form the Parliament Research Service (PRS) team, a non-profit body, which is doing yeoman work concerning Parliament and legislation. The attendance record of the MPs was, so far, a "secret" document. But an RTI application seeking the record has changed all that.

The statistics prepared on the basis of the record – for the period between June 2004 and December 2006 – indicated that the average attendance in both Houses is 70-75 per cent. It was also found that MPs below the age of 40 have lower attendance. The lowest attendance is by those MPs who are engaged in industry/business, media, entertainment, which mean those with an active career in these areas. Lawyers and educationists in the Lok Sabha have the best attendance.

The study provided many more interesting insights into the MPs'attendance. The PRS, which also comes out with session-wise and year-wise statistics related to Parliament, gives us a glimpse into what happened in these sessions – how many Bills were passed, how many hours were spent on discussing them, how many hours Parliament worked in all, and so on. In fact, even the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha websites provide details about even the number of hours lost due to disturbances/walk-outs/stalling of the proceedings.

There is enough quantitative data available about Parliament's proceedings. However, it does not tell us what the MP did when he was present in the House, and how effective he was. Or, for that matter, how he has been nurturing his constituency.

As a regular observer of Parliament's proceedings and as someone who interacts with the MPs regularly during the sessions and otherwise, what strikes one is the MPs' angst. Much of it stems from their frustration at not being acknowledged for their hard work and studious approach to their primary responsibility as lawmakers. Instead, the spotlight is almost always on the troublemakers.

One of the most oft-heard comments by the more serious MPs, born out of disappointment and irritation, is: "What is the use of spending so much time preparing for a debate or participating effectively in legislation, if no public recognition is given to us?" The present Speaker, Somnath Chatterjee, who has been one of the more serious MPs for decades, understands this aspect and has held meetings with media heads. He has requested the media to look at the positive happenings in Parliament, while certainly not neglecting the negative features.

But the Speaker's efforts have had only a marginal impact, going by the print and electronic media coverage during recent Parliament sessions.

Who are the MPs who perform their tasks as lawmakers, who hold the government accountable and represent their voters effectively? Who are the MPs who neglect these tasks?

for every Neta

ent lose out to troublemakers in publicity?

Speaker Somnath Chatterjee has requested the media to look at the positive happenings in Parliament, while certainly not neglecting the negative features

Despite the negative portrayal by a large section of the media of happenings in Parliament, the fact remains that outside those few moments during the day when all hell seems to break loose, there are many interesting and stimulating debates. Many a relevant question is raised and Ministers are cornered. Many interventions are made even from the Government's side and doubts cleared, thereby leading to a consensus.

However, if at all reported by the media, much of it gets buried – leading to frustration among MPs who have contributed to purposeful proceedings. On the other hand, a few troublemakers, shouting slogans and interrupting the proceedings, make headlines and get prime time treatment.

If this is one, very significant, aspect of the dwindling interest in Parliament today, another relates to how MPs get away without any accountability. Ironically, the Parliamentary system, based on the concept of accountability, with MPs being those who are chosen to call the Government to account, escapes accountability.

Who are the MPs who perform their tasks as lawmakers, who hold the government accountable and represent their voters effectively? Who are the MPs who neglect these tasks and are busier utilizing their position and power for their own ulterior motives? Is there any system to account for it? Can the ordinary citizen hold a mirror to his MP's work and his performance?

Sadly, in India there seems to be no mechanism or system to assess the qualitative performance of MPs. The need for such a mechanism is most felt these days, as we see all around a sense of despondency over the functioning of Parliament, with people increasingly viewing MPs with scepticism and, worse, suspicion.

A methodology needs to be adopted, first by developing parameters –acceptable across the board – to assess the performance of MPs not just in the House but in their constituencies too. An annual or bi-annual assessment under such a widely accepted system would not only go a long way to putting our Parliamentary system in a better perspective, but also provide a motivation for the MPs themselves to perform better. It would also bring in the much-needed recognition to those MPs, and there are a number of them from all parties, who put long and dedicated hours into their job but who go unsung and unheard. g

A shameful record

The statistics prepared on the basis of the record – for the period between June 2004 and December 2006 – indicated that the average attendance in both Houses was 70-75 per cent. It was also found that MPs below the age of 40 have lower attendance. The lowest attendance is by those MPs who are engaged in industry/business, media, entertainment, which mean those with an active career in these areas. Lawyers and educationists in the Lok Sabha have the best attendance.

Nepal's dream may

Can a PM who has lived as a fugitive in the bush bring about political

by Ramesh Menon

IN Nepal, euphoria over the elections, bidding goodbye to a 240-year-old monarchy, is over. It took three long months for a Prime Minister to be sworn in as the new political process was embroiled in one controversy or another. Sharing of power in a coalition has become a sticky issue. For the man on the street who has seen underdevelopment and poverty as two leitmotifs of the Himalayan country, this was enough to trigger cynicism.

With Prachanda, the erstwhile commander of the People's Liberation Army that was the army of the Maoists, now installed as Prime Minister, there is apprehension of how things will shape up. Former Prime Minister GP Koirala stayed away from the swearing in. Maoist Ministers have retained PLA cadres as their security. Prachanda is also going to have both the army and PLA guard him. The army has not taken kindly to suggestions that the 23,000-strong armed cadre of the PLA be integrated as they do not want indoctrinated personnel to change the character of the army. The world is watching Prachanda, who lived underground for 25 years – dodging his country's security forces and Interpol that had issued a red corner notice in 2003.

Nepal had raised hopes as it went to the polls in a historic election that saw 10,000 polling booths, over 2,34,000 election supervisors, 2,000 foreign election observers and over 10,000 candidates. This was a country racked by a decade-old Maoist insurgency that had killed over 10,000 people. Suddenly, there was hope. But it was soon replaced with despondency.

The Maoists won enough seats to make neighbours sit up. As they kissed the gun goodbye and embraced democracy, everyone hoped that Nepal would now, with a new political framework, work towards economic repair.

However, politicians in Nepal are no different from their Indian counterparts. Though history had given them an opportunity, they could not rise above narrow political, communal and personal considerations. Says CP Bhambri, National Fellow, Indian Council of Social Sciences: "Democracy cannot flourish in a system that has remnants of feudalism and monarchy. India abolished 656 princely states and then brought in land reforms that broke the back of feudal landlords for democracy to take root. Can Nepal do something like this?"

President Ram Baran Yadav, who defeated a Maoist candidate and was sworn in after much wrangling, urged the Maoists to form a consensus government, as they were the largest political party with 226 members in the Constituent Assembly. The Maoists responded with a 50-point Common Minimum Programme that is very similar to their manifesto, but other parties are not playing ball.

Dr S Chandrasekharan, Director, South Asian Analysis Group, a think tank, says India must persuade all parties to work together as no other combination at the moment will work. Says he: "If India's foreign policy does not work towards ensuring a stable government in Nepal, there will be utter chaos very soon as there is no worthwhile administration, fuel prices are doubling, water shortages are common, economic hardships increasing and no law and order in the Terai."

Prachanda: red carpet for capitalism?

No wonder there is a fearful and sceptical mood today. There were serious differences on who should be President, Prime Minister, Defence Minister *et al*. A new Cabinet would be put into place but there are fears that peace and prosperity is a far cry. Says Dr Chandrasekhar: "The Maoists must be given the responsibility to run the government. Let them feel how tough it can be."

Many are wondering if monarchy was a better option, as there was at least some semblance of order. Points out Qamar Agha, international affairs expert on South Asia: "There is a group among the Maoists who now feel that they should not have opted for polls and become a part of the bourgeois democracy as the revolution was unfinished. If the current fluid situation continues, there is bound to be a division in the Maoist movement. A radical coalition has no experience of running a government.

After jungle warfare, holding the reins of power is not going to be easy for the Maoists. A principal task on hand is drafting of the Constitution

turn nightmare

cohesion and economic repair?

PITFALLS AHEAD

For Nepal's population of 27 million, all this is looking like a bad dream. It is a fragile society torn along ethnic, religious and caste lines. Transiting into democracy should not end up in a fratricidal civil war. According to the United Nations World Food Programme, 2.5 million people in Nepal need food aid due to rising prices and drought. Another 3.9 million are reportedly at risk of becoming food-insecure. Nepal's growth rate is 2 per cent while inflation is 9 per cent. A third of the population is under the poverty line; half is illiterate. Nepal is one of the world's poorest countries with a per capita gross domestic product of about $1,100.

Pro-democracy march: stability still a question

They are blaming India and the US. But both these countries are not to blame as the Left strategy is to expound conspiracy theories. But if they do not sort themselves out and start governance, there is every possibility of violence."

The former rebels want the main rival political blocs to guarantee that no attempts will be made to topple their government for at least two years. They also want the rival parties to agree to a "minimum programme". And they want to bring in reforms to shake up the traditional feudal land-ownership structure. All this has been rejected by both the Nepali Congress and CPN-UML, which are the two largest parties after the Maoists.

After jungle warfare, holding the reins of power is not going to be easy for the Maoists. A principal task on hand is drafting of the new Constitution. It will ignite conflict as some groups want autonomy and the right to self-determination. Political watchers wonder if the Maoists will succeed in weakening the caste system. One of Prachanda's major challenges is to bring in reforms to restructure a shaky economy and attract capital. He has said that he is not against capitalism and foreign investment. But industry continues to be apprehensive.

Prachanda is now taking a fresh look at all treaties with India. As a big neighbour on which it is hugely dependent at the moment, they have to tread carefully. Political tightrope-walking is different from insurgency and guerilla warfare. India is a major donor besides supplying it all the essential commodities.

The former rebels want the main rival political blocs to guarantee that no attempts will be made to topple their government for at least two years

But China wants to push economic linkages with Nepal so as to limit India's role in the region. Financial assistance from China worth Nepali Rs 460 million is in the pipeline to construct roads. China is also keen to tap some of Nepal's 83,000-MW hydropower. Dr Abanti Bhattacharya, Associate Fellow, Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses in New Delhi, is of the view that China is working on economic linkages with Nepal. One of them is a rail link from Lhasa to Khasa on the Nepal-China border to be completed by 2013.

NEPAL'S politicians and bureaucrats have figured out that if it is closer to China, it can bargain better with India. At the moment, nearly 60 per cent of Nepal's trade is with India. As much as 50 per cent of Nepal's foreign remittances come from India. India's challenge is to support Nepal to gain economic and political stability before it spins out of control.

India played a major role in the peace process by getting various parties together in 2005. It also aggressively advocated the importance of having elections. But New Delhi put its foot into its mouth saying it would be happy to see the Nepali Congress win. After the landmark victory of the Maoists, it has tried to make amends with Prachanda but the Nepali suspicion of India wanting to play big brother remains.

Prachanda said in an interview recently that he is looking forward to working with India as that is the only way to bring stability and prosperity in Nepal. On the day he was sworn in, he was invited to visit India by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh. India, as Bhambri says, must assist the troubled new Republic to tread on to the road to democracy and win. It is in India's interest. g

Crisis in the

Georgia has managed Western pressure on Russia to withdraw, but r

NOT much is known about Georgia in our part of the world except perhaps that Stalin came from there. It is located on the eastern side of the Black Sea and has Russia to its north, Azerbaijan to its east, Armenia to its south and Turkey to its southwest. Measuring 69,700 sq km and with a population of 4.4 million, not counting the two breakaway regions, it is largely mountainous with the two Caucasian ranges passing through its territories. It considers itself part of both Asia and Europe. It is a member of the Asian Development Bank and has been working to become a member of the European Union (EU) and NATO. There are two important pipelines running through the country, an oil pipeline known as the BTC or Baku (Azerbaijan)-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (Turkey) pipeline and a parallel gas pipeline. Georgia also plans to develop its harbours to become a transportation hub for oil and gas from the hinterland. The economy wasn't doing well till aid from the EU and the US arrived.

One of the three Caucasian Republics, Georgia is known as an ethnic and religious maze which in modern times lost its independence when its last king gave it to the Russian Tsar in 1800. It was governed by Russian proconsuls until 1917 when it became independent with some help from British troops. It was reconquered by the Soviet Union.

It declared independence once more in 1989 after a failed upheaval in 1972. Eduard Shevardnadze came from Moscow to become President and was re-elected in 1995. He joined the Commonwealth of Independent States and conceded to the Russians the right to keep forces in Georgia and help train its army. Elements unhappy with his policy of close ties with Russia and seeking instead close ties with the US and EU agitated against him. On November 23, 2003, in what is described as the bloodless Rose revolution, Shevardnadze was made to resign and the current President, Mikheil Saakashvili, was elected on January 4 , 2004. Saakashvili has studied in the US, has a Dutch wife and advocates membership of EU and NATO. He decided to strengthen Georgia's army, get US trainers and start the process of joining NATO. He also sent troops to Iraq to serve with the American troops. Internally, it has not been smooth sailing. In 2007, there were protests and he had to declare an Emergency. The President resisted calls for his resignation and instead brought forward the next elections, cutting short his term by a year. He was re-elected in January 2008.

There are two autonomous regions on the borders of Russia and Georgia –Abkhazia and Southern Ossetia, the latter also known as the Tshinvali region.The third autonomous region is on the Turkish border but has been brought under Georgian control. It is in the first two that Georgia has been facing discontent and rebellion. There was a war in Abkhazia in 1992-93 when about 200,000 Georgians were killed or chased away–making Abkhazia a *de facto* state. In Southern Ossetia (Northern Ossetia being in Russia), there are many Russians –both as residents and as peacekeepers between Georgians and the locals. Georgians claim the Russians are encouraging them to break away while the Russians claim that the Georgians have been killing the locals and the peacekeepers.

The Russian military action seems to have sent a strong message to other former Soviet republics. It has clearly prompted Poland to finalize its missile agreement with the US. It has also brought together several of the East and North European former Soviet republics

In July 2008, the Ossetia militia and Georgian armed forces clashed – leading to a fullfledged attack by Georgian forces. Russia claimed that 1,600 Ossetians were killed. On August 8, Russian troops supported by air power entered South Ossetia

Caucasus

t no one wants a return to the Cold War

Russian invasion: warning to NATO

in support of Ossetians and those described as Russian peacekeepers already stationed there. They went into Georgia to about 30 km from the capital. Georgia left the CIS on August 14.

The Georgian President sought help from the West. President Nicholas Sarkozy of France flew to Moscow and negotiated a ceasefire. Georgian troops withdrew and the Russians agreed to withdraw once the area is secure. US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice visited Georgia, promised humanitarian assistance and called for a peaceful solution. US President George Bush criticized Russian intrusion and said that the territorial integrity of Georgia was non-negotiable but added that differences have to be resolved peacefully.

At present it seems that neither Europe nor the US is interested in a physical confrontation nor in any revival of the Cold War despite pressures from some quarters who would like to punish Russia for attacking an independent democratic state. However, both Russia and the West need each other and the former is being gradually brought into the global system. Therefore it is likely that, while noises will be made especially since this is election year in the US, matters will hardly go beyond that. A slight chill may develop between the two resulting in atmospherics over some issues like the Olympics but cooperation on terrorism, nuclear proliferation and economics is too valuable for relations to get seriously affected. Georgia will have to talk with Russia either directly or/and under the auspices of the UN /EU about the two breakaway regions. Russia seems determined that they should remain separate from Georgia and seek their own future. Pressure will grow on Russia to withdraw early from Georgia. What form these pressures will take and how Russia handles them is to be seen.

Georgia has been described as an East-West faultline like Serbia and is perhaps more important because of its proximity to Russia and the two pipelines which pass through it. It is possible these pipelines could ensure peace as any disruption could prove very expensive for all concerned.

The Russian military action seems to have sent a strong message to other former Soviet republics. It has clearly prompted Poland to finalize its missile agreement with the US. It has also brought together several of the East and North European former Soviet republics who have been trying to strengthen ties with the West in the face of opposition and suspicion from Russia. Russia has made its point to Georgia, but it will now need to use diplomacy. There is talk of international peacekeepers.

As for Georgia, it has been part of the Persian, Ottoman, Russian and later the Soviet empires. It now wants to be part of the Western empire. Such changes, history indicates, are rarely peaceful unless gradual. g

The writer is former Indian ambassador to Argentina

SCIP YOUR PROBLEMS CONVENIENTLY

LOOKING FOR

SOUND INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES?

STUCK UP IN INCOME TAX OR OTHER TAX-RELATED ISSUES?

FEEL SHORT-CHANGED OR CHEATED?

FED UP WITH SHODDY SERVICES OF BANKS, INVESTMENT COMPANIES BROKERS AND MOBILE OR OTHER SERVICE PROVIDERS?

Come to **Society for Consumers' and Investors' Protection**

SCIP is an NGO, registered with the Registrar of Societies, New Delhi and is empanelled with the Ministry of Company Affairs and Securities & Exchange Board of India (SEBI).

Activities and Services of SCIP

- Investor protection programmes and strategies
- Human resource development
- Seminars on contemporary issues
- Information bank on all listed companies
- Content provider on related issues for print/electronic media
- Quick redressal of consumers'/investors' grievances and complaints
- Generating consumer and investor activism through consumer/investor protection workshops
- Assistance to local investor associations and similar protection groups
- Recommendations on investments
- Tax planning workshops
- Capital market research

Society for Consumers' & Investors' Protection (Regd)
118, 2nd Floor, DDA Site No. 1, New Rajinder Nagar, New Delh-110 060.
Ph/Fax: +91-11-28744789, 45082832, 20544692 E-mail: scipindia@yahoo.com

rajesh kishore

Gujarat's ghost cards

How an intrepid bureaucrat busted a multi-crore racket

by Yogesh Sharma

THE Food and Civil Supplies Department of Gujarat launched a campaign to detect fake ration cards on July 1 this year. Within 40 days, 3.55 lakh fake ration cards were detected, more than the number unearthed in the past decade. But this is just the tip of the proverbial ice berg, a mere 3 per cent of the 1.24 crore fake ration cards the government estimates are in use in the state.

Encouraged by this success, the Principal Secretary of the Department, Rajesh Kishore, has initiated a massive drive to detect fake ration cards in Ahmedabad city. Sixteen teams will fan out in the city's seven zones to put an end to the racket. Already, since the start of the state-wide campaign, 35,000 bogus ration cards have been found in Ahmedabad. Again, this is less than 3 per cent of the total number in Ahmedabad. The city has 11 lakh ration cardholders.

Kishore spells out the strategy his Department has adopted. "We are concentrating on the system. Fair Price Shops are the main contacts of operators as they cannot act without the knowledge of the shops," he points out. Initially, FPS owners were warned. This was followed by random checks of shop records.

For Ahmedabad, which has 16,000 FPS, the Department has worked out a concentrated campaign. Instead of having a scattered operation with limited resources, it has been decided to pool all resources and have a full-throttle operation in one city. For impact in terms of success and number, Ahmedabad is the first choice – to be followed by Surat.

Detection of fake ration cards is an ongoing operation of the Department but the intensified drive has made the difference. Generally, about 30,000 fake cards are detected every year. This year, 4.23 lakh have been detected in the state since April 1. In terms of savings, the amount would run into crores of rupees. Kishore also points out that elimination of the fake cards from the system would help the government's endeavour to reach food grains to those millions in dire need of subsidized food and fuel. At present, there is a shortage but, if the fake cards are weeded out, the supply would be able to meet the real demand.

Kerosene is the most misused, says Kishore. The free sale price is around Rs 40 per litre while the FPS price is around Rs 9.50. The entire subsidy is borne by the Central government. A card with up to three family members gets 5 litres per month while others get 10. The kerosene is meant only for fuel and lighting. To prevent misuse of FPS kerosene by LPG customers, the Department has asked all gas dealers to stamp ration cards of LPG customers. The process is still on.

In the case of food grains, both the state and Centre have a stake. Last year, the Food Corporation of India price of wheat was Rs 10 per kg. There were handling charges. However, the Centre offered wheat at Rs 5 a kg after subsidy of more than Rs 5 per kg. The state then gave a further subsidy of 50 per cent and wheat was provided at Rs 2 a kg. Under the BPL (Below Poverty Line) scheme, wheat is provided at Rs 9 a kg while the Antyodaya scheme has a quota of 19 kg. "But wheat and other food grains with subsidy of more than 75 per cent go straight to the doors of flour mills instead of the doors of the poor," says Kishore.

Owing to the scale of subsidy, there is temptation to misuse the Public Distribution System and many people are willing to be part of the racket. But, under the law, only licence-holders can be booked. Individuals have to be booked under the Indian Penal Code. The solution is to have photo ration cards, Smart Cards and online information about godowns, FPS and ration card-holders, according to Kishore. However, all this requires elaborate ground work. Maharashtra and Kerala have invited tenders for making the PDS system online. Chhattisgarh has connected godowns with FPS. A lot remains to be done to make the system foolproof but Kishore is sure that, with the help of technology, the solution will soon be in place. g

Queue at an FPS; (below) Rajesh Kishore

Generally, about 30,000 bogus cards are detected every year. But this year, 4.23 lakh bogus cards have been detected in Gujarat since April 1

Approach the market with caution

THE markets have recovered almost 20 per cent from the July 16 low of around 1250. The two major reasons commonly cited for the steep recovery are: fall in the price of crude and improvement in the political scenario in the country. Crude prices have fallen from a high of $147 a barrel on July 11 and are now hovering at around $114 – a fall of more than 20 per cent. The political scenario has considerably improved with the withdrawal of support by the Left and the subsequent winning of the trust vote by the UPA government with new-found allies who look to be more reforms-friendly. With this there has been optimism around the key reforms being pursued by the government especially with regard to pensions, banking and insurance as also the disinvestment in public sector enterprises. Moreover, the uncertainty with regard to early elections being held in November-December also seems to have dissipated with the allies apparently not in favour of it.

From nothing wrong with the Indian story six months back to everything wrong are the two extremes everybody is talking about whereas there is a lot between these two extremes

But the biggest question that investors are asking is: will this rise sustain? There are issues like the Iran-Israel tension, the impact of full write-offs in the US sub-prime crisis which may take more than a year and possibility of oil prices rocketing back. More serious are concerns on the domestic front such as high inflation (12 per cent plus), high interest rates, currency volatility, looming fiscal deficit, slowing earnings growth of the corporate sector, declining Index of Industrial Production and so on.

However, on comparing these fears with the fall the market already had, one would conclude that they have been discounted in a far more disproportionate way. The market should therefore be looked at with caution more than fear. From nothing wrong with the Indian story six months back to everything wrong are the two extremes everybody is talking about whereas there is a lot between these two extremes. To say that the worst is over may not be entirely right but how many of us actually perfectly time the market especially when investors are spread globally and the scenario may change overnight?

While the short term may not appear too rosy, the long-term opportunity cannot be ignored. The country may not be able to achieve the growth rate of 9 per cent plus it has been achieving in the past, but in most conservative estimates the rate may not sink below 7.5 per cent. This would still be one of the highest globally. Given a 35 per cent plus savings rate and disposable incomes likely to increase further partly due to the timely implementation of the Sixth Pay Commission recommendations, the demand scenario in the country is not likely to turn gloomy. The latest tax collection figures and top-line growth in the corporate sector has further belied any major slowdown in the economy.

The valuations with the sensex trading at a modest 13-14 times FY 09 earnings look compelling. This, in fact, is on a par with the valuations in 2003 – the year that marked the beginning of the five-year bull run. If one can select the right stocks, the returns over a period of 2-3 years could be phenomenal. This has recently been proved when the sensex rose from around 12,500 to 15,000 with a number of stocks giving returns of over 50 per cent in just three weeks. In fact, the stocks that were beaten down the most performed the best. This gives enough hints to a small investor when it comes to selecting a stock without losing sight of fundamentals.

Alps Industries (CMP Rs 26)

FOUNDED in 1962, this Ghaziabad-based company manufactures and sells a diverse range of home furnishing, fashion accessories and yarns in India. It also offers a range of architectural products under the brand name 'Vista' and fashion accessories under the brand name 'Le-Pashmina'. The company also exports its home furnishings to North America, Europe, South Africa, and Southeast Asia. It has completed various expansion projects in spinning, weaving and processing well ahead of schedule. In January 2008, it announced the establishment of a wholly-owned subsidiary – Alps Energy Pvt Ltd to make investments in various energy projects.

The company earned a total income of Rs 205 crore in the June 2008 quarter as against Rs 195 crore the previous quarter, ie March 2008. Operating profits were at Rs 29.64 crore against Rs 17.53 crore, giving an OPM of 14.6 per cent as against 9 per cent for the same period. Net profit stood at Rs 7.43 crore as against a loss of Rs 16 crore (due to some exceptional expenditure incurred). The EPS for the quarter was Rs 2.15 on an equity base of Rs 34.51 crore. This gives an estimated annualized EPS of Rs 8. With a book value of Rs 84, the stock is a steal.

At current price, it is down almost 70 per cent of its price in early January. With expansion projects implemented, the company's earnings are likely to witness a quantum jump. Keep on buying this stock at these levels. I will not be surprised if it multiplies 4-5 times in a span of 2-3 years. g

The author has no exposure in the stock recommended in this column. gfiles does not accept responsibility for investment decisions by readers of this column. Investment-related queries may be sent to gfilesindia@gmail.com with Dr Sood's name in the subject line.

birthdays

IAS officers' birthdays | Sept 16-Oct 15, '08

Amitabh Verma
16-09-1959
CADRE: BIHAR
vermaa@ias.nic.in

Susan Mathew
17-09-1951
CADRE: TAMIL NADU
smathew@ias.nic.in

Vijay Bhushan Pathak
18-09-1964
CADRE: SIKKIM
pathakvb@ias.nic.in

Anita Kaul
19-09-1954
CADRE: KARNATAKA
kaula@ias.nic.in

Uma Mukherjee
20-09-1952
CADRE: WEST BENGAL
uma.mukherje@ias.nic.in

Deepak Gupta
21-09-1951
CADRE: JHARKHAND
guptad1@ias.nic.in

Dilip Kumar Kotia
22-09-1952
CADRE: UTTARAKHAND
kotiadk@ias.nic.in

Vineet Chaudhary
23-09-1958
CADRE: HIMACHAL PRADESH
cvineet@ias.nic.in

Kamal Preet Singh
24-09-1977
CADRE: CHHATTISGARH
singhkp2@ias.nic.in

Seikholien Thandou
25-09-1948
CADRE: ASSAM-MEGHALAYA
thandous@ias.nic.in

Tejinder Kaur
26-09-1949
CADRE: PUNJAB
kaurt@ias.nic.in

Tanmay Kumar
27-09-1966
CADRE: RAJASTHAN
kumart2@ias.nic.in

Nita Bali
28-09-1950
CADRE: UNION TERRITORY
nitabali@ias.nic.in

CB Venkataramana
29-09-1955
CADRE: ANDHRA PRADESH
venkicb@ias.nic.in

NB Patil
30-09-1950
CADRE: MAHARASHTRA
patilnb@ias.nic.in

E Ezung
01-10-1948
CADRE: NAGALAND
01NL005512@ias.nic.in

Balwan Singh
02-10-1950
CADRE: HARYANA
sbalwan@ias.nic.in

T Balakrishnan
03-10-1951
CADRE: KERALA
tbkrish@ias.nic.in

Aashish Srivastava
04-10-1966
CADRE: MADHYA PRADESH
sriasish@ias.nic.in

Pradipta Ranjan Saha
05-10-1954
CADRE: ORISSA
sahapr@ias.nic.in

Bishen Dass
06-10-1952
CADRE: JAMMU & KASHMIR
bishen.d@ias.nic.in

Tanusree Deb Barma
07-10-1982
CADRE: MANIPUR-TRIPURA
tanusree.ias@ias.nic.in

AM Mankad
08-10-1956
CADRE: GUJARAT
a.m.mankad@ias.nic.in

K Sreenivasulu
09-10-1961
CADRE: SIKKIM
sreeni@ias.nic.in

Ram Kinkar Gupta
10-10-1950
CADRE: MADHYA PRADESH
rkgupta95@ias.nic.in

Himanshu Kumar
11-10-1965
CADRE: UTTAR PRADESH
kumarh@ias.nic.in

N Sriraman
12-10-1952
CADRE: KARNATAKA
sriraman.ias@ias.nic.in

KB Valsalakumari
13-10-1952
CADRE: KERALA
valsalak@ias.nic.in

IPS officers' birthdays | Sept 16-Oct 15, '08

Ambrish Chandra Sharma
16-09-1953
CADRE: UTTAR PRADESH
ac_sharma@mail.svpnpa.gov.in

M Mohan Raj
17-09-1948
CADRE: ASSAM-MEGHALAYA
mmohanraj@mail.svpnpa.gov.in

Tilak Kak
18-09-1947
CADRE: UTTAR PRADESH
tilakkak@mail.svpnpa.gov.in

Ravi Kant Sharma
19-09-1952
CADRE: HARYANA
ravikant@mail.svpnpa.gov.in

Ashok Kumar Abrol
20-09-1947
CADRE: WEST BENGAL
ashok@mail.svpnpa.gov.in

KR Kaushik
21-09-1948
CADRE: GUJARAT
krkaushik@mail.svpnpa.gov.in

Subodh Kumar Jaiswal
22-09-1962
CADRE: MAHARASHTRA
skjaiswal@mail.svpnpa.gov.in

Jasbir Singh
23-09-1954
CADRE: SIKKIM
jasbirsingh@mail.svpnpa.gov.in

AS Rynjah
24-09-1955
CADRE: ASSAM-MEGHALAYA
asrynjah@mail.svpnpa.gov.in

Sanjay Kumar
25-09-1969
CADRE: ORISSA
sanjaykumar@mail.svpnpa.gov.in

Ajay Kumar Yadav
26-09-1970
CADRE: HIMACHAL PRADESH
akyadav@mail.svpnpa.gov.in

PK Sharma
27-09-1948
CADRE: MADHYA PRADESH
pk_sharma@mail.svpnpa.gov.in

Vijay Raghav Pant
28-09-1952
CADRE: UTTARAKHAND
vrpant@mail.svpnpa.gov.in

Janardan Singh
29-09-1972
CADRE: NAGALAND
janardhans@mail.svpnpa.gov.in

K Natarajan
30-09-1951
CADRE: KERALA
natarajank@mail.svpnpa.gov.in

Archana Ramasundram
01-10-1957
CADRE: TAMIL NADU
archana@mail.svpnpa.gov.in

Goduguhuri Srinivasa Rao
02-10-1972
CADRE: MANIPUR-TRIPURA
gsrao@mail.svpnpa.gov.in

Ajay Singh
03-10-1949
CADRE: UTTAR PRADESH
ajaisingh@mail.svpnpa.gov.in

Paras Nath
04-10-1967
CADRE: BIHAR
parasnath@mail.svpnpa.gov.in

Narinderpal Singh
05-10-1957
CADRE: PUNJAB
narinderpal@mail.svpnpa.gov.in

NV Patel
06-10-1948
CADRE: GUJARAT
nvpatel@mail.svpnpa.gov.in

Md Shakeel Akhtar
07-10-1962
CADRE: TAMIL NADU
shakeelakhtar@mail.svpnpa.gov.in

Saurabh Singh
08-10-1969
CADRE: HARYANA
saurabhsingh@mail.svpnpa.gov.in

RS Dhillon
09-10-1953
CADRE: RAJASTHAN
rsdhillon@mail.svpnpa.gov.in

AR Anuradha
10-10-1963
CADRE: ANDHRA PRADESH
anuradha@mail.svpnpa.gov.in

Uday Sahay
11-10-1961
CADRE: AGMUT
usahay@mail.svpnpa.gov.in

RK Padmanabhan
12-10-1959
CADRE: MAHARASHTRA
rkpadhmanabhan@mail.svpnpa.gov.in

Sanjay Singh
13-10-1966
CADRE: WEST BENGAL
sanjays@mail.svpnpa.gov.in

For the complete list, see www.indianbuzz.com

TRACKING

For a complete list of appointments & retirements, see www.indianbuzz.com

RANJANA SINHA
The 1975-batch IAS officer of the Maharashtra cadre has been posted as Principal Secretary, Accounts & Treasuries of the state.

SS RASAILY
The 1992-batch IFS officer of the Uttarakhand cadre has become Director of the Rajaji National Park, Dehradun district.

VINOD SINGHAL
The 1987-batch IFS officer of the Uttarakhand cadre has taken over as Director of Corbett National Park.

GAUTAM SEN
The 1976-batch IDAS officer is now Principal Controller of Defence Accounts of the Army's Northern Command at Jammu.

ASHWANI KUMAR
The 1973-batch IPS officer of the Himachal Pradesh cadre has become Director of the Central Bureau of Investigation.

P JOY OOMMEN
The 1977-batch IAS officer of the Chhattisgarh cadre has been appointed Chief Secretary of the state.

PK RASTOGI
The 1974-batch IAS officer of the Andhra Pradesh cadre has become Secretary in the Ministry of Steel.

DN GAUTAM
The 1974-batch IPS officer of the Bihar cadre has been appointed Director-General of Police of the state.

RAJESH KUMAR SINHA
The 1994-batch IAS officer of the Kerala cadre is the new Director in the Ministry of Urban Development.

RUPINDER SINGH
The 1996-batch IAS officer of the Maharashtra cadre is now Private Secretary to the Minister of State for Steel.

SUDHIR GARG
The 1990-batch IAS officer of the Uttar Pradesh cadre has joined the Government of India as Director, Commerce.

MANOJ AHUJA
The 1990-batch IAS officer of the Orissa cadre is now Private Secretary to the Vice-Chairman of the Planning Commission.

ATUL CHATURVEDI
The 1974-batch IAS officer of the Uttar Pradesh cadre has taken over as Secretary, Fertilizers in the Government of India.

SANJAY KUMAR
The 1995-batch IA & AS officer has been posted in the Ministry of Urban Development as Deputy Secretary.

AARIZ AFTAB
The 1991-batch IAS officer of the West Bengal cadre is now Registrar, Cooperative Societies of the state.

ANIL KUMAR
The 1971-batch CES officer has taken over as Director-General (Works) in the Central Public Works Department.

UMA GOEL
The 1978-batch CSS officer has become Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperation.

INDU KUMAR PANDE
The 1975-batch IAS officer of the Uttarakhand cadre has been appointed Chief Secretary of the state.

Launching the
gfiles
E-MAGAZINE

www.gfilesindia.com

EXCLUSIVE
NEWS, VIEWS, INSIGHTS

gfiles is the country's first magazine focusing exclusively on governance and India's vast and formidable network of bureaucracies and public sector organisations. It is the only platform from which India's top decision-makers and thought leaders speak out freely and fearlessly.

gfiles
INSIDE THE GOVERNMENT

SARVASHRESTHA MEDIA PVT LTD,
118,2ND FLOOR, DDA SITE 1,
NEW RAJENDRA NAGAR, NEW DELHI-60
Tel/Fax: (011) 28744789, 45082832,
20544692, E-mail: gfilesindia@gmail.com
www.gfilesindia.com www.gfiles.info

Moving On: ias and ips officers retiring in September 2008

ASSAM-MEGHALAYA
S Thandou (1993)
ANDHRA PRADESH
J Sridhara Sarma (1971)
BIHAR
NS Madhavan (1975)
GUJARAT
M Subramaniyam (1972)
HARYANA
Ranjit Issar (1972)

HIMACHAL PRADESH
Rajesh Kumar (1994)
KERALA
KSP Kurup (1996)
MADHYA PRADESH
Prem P Mathur (1972)
MAHARASHTRA
VP Raja (1974)
MANIPUR-TRIPURA
Biman Behari Das(1995)

NAGALAND
E Ezung (1996)
PUNJAB
Rabindra N Gupta (1975)
RAJASTHAN
Rakesh K Sharma (1989)
TAMIL NADU
E Dasaradhan (1984)
UTTAR PRADESH
Dharam C Lakha (1976)

UNION TERRITORIES
Pradeep Singh (1974)
WEST BENGAL
Prasad Ranjan Ray (1972)

ips

ASSAM-MEGHALAYA
M Mohan Raj (1975)
GUJARAT
KR Kaushik (1972)

MADHYA PRADESH
PK Sharma (1973)
MAHARASHTRA
MB Shinde (1984)
ORISSA
GC Nanda (1974)
UTTAR PRADESH
Ashish K Mitra (1970)
Ram Lal Ram (1976)
Rajendra P Singh (1986)

Subscribe before October 31, 2008 to get

50% OFF

gfiles
INSIDE THE GOVERNMENT

Subscribing to gfiles means value for your money. With each issue priced at Rs 200, we present an offer that's truly competitive in terms of price as well as the quality of premium content that is at your disposal. Avail of a unique combination of news and analyses into the elite world of the real government, the powers that make and implement the decisions that influence your as well as millions of lives! What's more, gfiles also has a package of yearly subscription that brings you the same premium reading while saving money.

MAIL ORDER REQUEST FORM

Yes, I would like to subscribe to G-FILES magazine for the offer indicated below

Tick one	Term (years)	No. of issues	Cover Price (Rs.)	You pay (Rs.)	You save (Rs.)	% Saving
☐	3	36	7200	3600	3600	50
☐	2	24	4800	2400	2400	50
☐	1	12	2400	1200	1200	50

Name: Mr/Ms Date of Birth: D D M M Y Y

Address:

PIN:

Designation:_____ Ph(Off): (Res): e-mail:_____

Please find enclosed Cheque/DD No.: Dated: for Rs:_____ drawn on _____(specify bank)
favouring SARVASHRESTHA MEDIA PVT. LTD.

Fill in this order form and mail it with your remittance to
Sarvashrestha Media Pvt Ltd, 118, 2nd Floor, DDA Site 1, New Rajinder Nagar, New Delhi-110060

TERMS & CONDITIONS: Rates & offers valid in India only. Three to five weeks for processing of your subscription will be permissible. Add Rs.20/- (Rupees Twenty Only) for cheques and demand drafts from out of Delhi. Please include your name and address on the reverse of your Cheque/Demand Draft. SARVASHRESTHA MEDIA accepts no responsibility for any transit delays, loss, or mutilation of the subscription form. All disputes are subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of competent courts in New Delhi only. For any official enquiry or correspondence, please contact: SARVASHRESTHA MEDIA PVT. LTD. 118, 2nd floor, DDA Site 1, New Rajinder Nagar, New Delhi-110060 Tel: (011) 28744789, TEL/FAX: +91-11-28744789, +91-11-45092832, +91-11-20544692, E-mail: gfilesindia@gmail.com; www. gfiles.info
G-Files reserves the right to change its subscription rates and other terms and conditions without any prior notice. Your personal details shall be kept absolutely confidential by G-files. Please note that the submission of the above subscription form does not in any way guarantee you the right to a subscription of the magazine. G-files reserves the right to summarily accept/reject any subscription form.

Brought to you by :
gfiles
INSIDE THE GOVERNMENT

Track the latest and hottest happenings inside the Indian bureaucracy

buzz tomorrow's news today

Log on daily to indianbuzz.com
indianbuzz.com
buzz today, news tomorrow
the premier webnews site about Indian bureaucracy

TO OUR READERS

WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT TO SERVE YOU BETTER

Your unique magazine has now been around for just over a year. This was a testing period for our new venture supported by an initial working capital from professional journalists. From the enthusiastic responses we have been receiving we know we have passed with flying colours. Reader support has been overwhelming and for that we extend our deepest gratitude.

Nonetheless, because of the stringent production and newsgathering standards we have maintained, we have been absorbing significant losses. We fully anticipated them. But, thanks to our readers' patronage and loyalty, we have been able to build a quality brand that began to get advertising support from the third month after we commenced production. This, however, has been less than we were expecting in order to upscale our product and to give it better readability, visuals, and visibility.

We have decided, however, to expand the scope of our coverage in order to include areas such as IRS, Postal Service, Indian Defence Accounts Services, Railways, allied services, and more news from the states by increasing the pages and strengthening our team so that our readers will continue to receive exclusive, high-quality information that is not available to them through any other channel.

In order to do this, we have decided to drastically prune our list of free subscriptions on a random basis. Your name could well be deleted. *gfiles* is not sold through newsstands. **In order to continue to receive gfiles we request you to support us by filling in the subscription form. If you do so before October 31, 2008 you will get a flat 50% discount on the cover price, which means that your annual subscription fee will be just Rs 1200.**

We hope you will take advantage of this unique opportunity and continue to be a part of the *gfiles* fraternity as we march from strength to strength.

gfiles
INSIDE THE GOVERNMENT
'Regulation of the steel sector should be the last resort'
'The party in power is invariably unhappy with us'

Lucre has no lure for SAIL officer

INURED as we are by now to such trifling matters of administration as "facilitation" money, here is a story that warms the cockles of the heart. A senior officer of the Steel Authority of India Ltd. was approached by a client to name the amount he would take in return for doing him a favour. The officer began by stating that he would require

a separate provision of Rs 15 crore as the cost of professional and health hazards.

He explained the break-up of this figure by pointing out that, once he took the bribe, he was bound to develop a number of health problems such as blood pressure, diabetes and depression, not to speak of other deadly diseases that might also afflict him. The treatment of these diseases in the world's best facilities would cost him Rs 5 crore. And Rs 5 crore would go towards handling various professional hazards: investigating agencies, police, media and income tax officials, as they would start chasing him from the day he accepted the bribe. The remaining Rs 5 crore he would keep in a Swiss account as contingency money.

The officer went on to clarify to the client that he would accept the Rs 15 crore with the knowledge of the media and other agencies and that only after this amount was paid would he be ready to negotiate the real cut. That, of course, would be accepted only under the table.

The client left, thoroughly chastened. The officer has since retired.

CBI appointment: Inside story

POLITICAL considerations reportedly prevailed over merit and seniority in the recent appointment of the Director of the Central Bureau of Investigation. ML Sharma, a 1972-batch IPS officer of the Rajasthan cadre, was superceded by Ashwini Sharma, a 1973-batch IPS officer of the Himachal Pradesh cadre and DGP of the state. This took place during a last-minute review of an earlier decision

in favour of Sharma, who has gone on leave subsequent to his humiliation.

Kumar's name did not come up out of the blue. The grapevine says he maintains excellent PR in the corridors of power. He was also part of the Special Protection Group (SPG) that provided security to Rajiv Gandhi, which lent him proximity to 10, Janpath. And he played a role in helping a member of a top political family secure ownership of land in Himachal Pradesh during his posting in his cadre state.

On the other hand, what went against Sharma was that his handling of the controversial Bofors investigation had "endeared" him to a top political family of the country. And he had angered a Samajwadi Party duo by grilling them in a case of corruption. When the trust vote in Parliament brought about a new-found cordiality between the Congress and the SP, the latter party's aggrieved duo rushed to meet the Prime Minister and expressed their resentment of Sharma's selection.

Bhardwaj henchman draws ire

THE Ministry of Law and Justice differs from others, in that it is manned entirely by officers drawn from the Indian Legal Service. However, BB Jain, the Private Secretary to Cabinet Minister Hansraj Bhardwaj, does not belong to any of the state or Union services. He joined the Ministry as a clerk and endeared himself to Bhardwaj. Bhardwaj is the Law Minister for any Congress government at the Centre, and the fact that Jain, a mere clerk, is his Private Secretary is a bitter pill to

swallow for the Ministry's officers right from Director to Secretary. Most galling is the fact that Jain continues in the post even after retirement.

The rumour in Shastri Bhawan is that the appointment of notaries by the Law Ministry, which used to be a gesture of charity during the Indira Gandhi era, has now become commercialized and a crowd of applicants can be seen meeting Jain during notary harvest season.

Journalists too have a grudge against Jain. He fobs off a lone journo seeking to meet the Minister but, confronted by a group, he yields.

ILLUSTRATIONS: ARUNA

Sunny days for Goa's underlings

GOA's Ministers, afraid that top-ranking babus of the state may not second all their decisions, have come up with a novel way of bypassing them. Like any other state, Goa too has a big chunk of officers drawn from the state cadre. Plus, there exists a vertical hierarchy among IAS officers. The Ministers, as a matter of strategy, have unanimously agreed to ignore the bureaucratic heads of all the departments in official dealings of every nature, according to sources. Instead, the junior IAS officers and the officers of the state cadre are being entrusted with important assignments and advice is sought from them in matters of governance. g

Amazing AUSTRALIA

8 Days

40404040

Rs. 68,999/-*

Sydney - 3nts | G. Coast - 4nts,

Incl.: Airfare, Stay, B/f, All transfers

Gold Coast : Sea world, Dream world & Movie world Tour
Sydney : City tour, Dinner cruise.

8 Days

VISIT EGYPT

Rs. 41,999/-*

Cairo-2nts | Nile Cruise (full board basis) - 3 Nights | Train - 2 Night

Egypt is a prime location to see our great heritage from the ancient world, including Pyramids and wonderful temples, Egypt also offers nature and desert treks, great scuba diving and even golf, fishing and birding expeditions. One may choose to relax on the wondrous Egypt Red Sea or Sinai coasts, take in the high culture of Cairo, or even leisurely float down the Egyptian Nile on a luxurious river boat.

Incl.: Airfare, Breakfast, Transfers, Sight seeing.

TURKEY

7 Days

Istanbul - 3 Nights, Kusadasi - 3 Nights

Rs. 44,999/-*

The landscape of Turkey is magnificent, woll-used Turkish carpet, hundreds of years old, displaying patterns which have evolved over the centuries.

Incl.: Airfare, Stay, B/f, Transfers, Sight seeing.

SOUTH AFRICA

8 Days

Capetown - 3nts | Suncity - 2nts |
Johannesburg - 2nts

Rs. 95,999/-*

South Africa is enriched with many fascinating experiences, many world renowned people and many amazing places.

Incl.: Airfare, Stay, Breakfast, Transfers, Sight seeing.

KATHMANDU

Radisson	(All Meals & Casino Coupon)	Rs. 14,777/-*	3N/4D P.P. on Twin Sharing
Yak & Yeti	(All Meals & Casino Coupon)	Rs. 14,555/-*	
Annapurna	(All Meals & Casino Coupon)	Rs. 12,888/-*	Includes Return Airfare with Hotel Pkg.
Soaltee Crowne Plaza		Rs. 13,555/-*	
Hyatt Regency		Rs. 13,555/-*	
Grand		Rs. 9,888/-*	

*Airport Taxes Extra

Incl. : Return Airport Transfer, Welcome Drink on arrival, Daily Breakfast in Hotel Restaurant, Sight Seeing.

LTC UNBELIEVABLE OFFER LTC

DEL - GAU - DEL — 6N/7D

Gawahati - 2nts, Kaziranga - 2nts, Shillong-2 nts
Incl.: Airfare, Sight Seeing, All Meals
Rs. 35,010/-*

DEL - BANGALORE - DEL — 6N/7D

Bg-1nt. Mysore - 1nt, Ooty- 2nts, Kodai Kanal - 2nts
Airfare, Breakfast, Sight seeing
Rs. 36,780/-*

CCU - BAGDOGRA - CCU — 3N/4D

3 Nts in Darjeeling
Airfare, Breakfast, Sight seeing
Rs. 16,030/-*

DEL - BAGDOGRA - DEL — 5N/6D

Darjeeling-2Nts, Gangtok-2Nts, Kalimpong-1nt
Airfare, Breakfast, Sight seeing
Rs. 30,160/-*

GLIMPSES OF LEH & LADAKH — 3N/4D

Airfare, Breakfast, Sight seeing
Rs. 17,463/-*
*Airport taxes included

Authorised Agent for Singapore Visa

SPRING TRAVELS (P) LTD.

H.O. : 310, Ambika Vihar, Paschim Vihar, Delhi-110087, Ph.: 40404040
Fax : 42334928, info@vinnytours.com, www.springtravels.com

IATA TAFI

Conditions Apply Per Person Cost, Airport Taxes, Visa Fees & Handling charges extra.

Regn.No.DL(C)-12/1161/2007-09 Licence No. U(C)-3/2007-09
Licence to post without prepayment Posted on 4th & 5th of every
month at IARI Post Office R.N.I. No: DELENG/2007/19719 Rs.200

What does it take to fly someone like a star?

Nobody but India's only 5-star certified airline knows that every guest deserves to be treated like a star.

Kingfisher Airlines believes in treating every flyer as a guest on board and not a passenger. We understand that the on-ground experience must have you flying even before take-off. That seats must let you stretch out and find your space. That cuisine must be a feast for every sense. That entertainment must be perfectly tuned in to you. At Kingfisher Airlines we understand that flying is about the journey, not just the destination.

Come fly the Good Times.
Come fly like a star.

skytrax
a certified
5 Star Airline

KINGFISHER AIRLINES
Fly the good times
www.flykingfisher.com

equus red cell.208